THE ENGLISH REVIEW

Current Comments

MARCH, 1933

The Crisis in Democracy

ALL Conservatives should read Professor H. J. Laski's new book, "The Crisis in Democracy,"* which has just been published. It reveals its distinguished author at his best. His analysis of the conditions on which capitalism exists is quite ruthless but quite fair. It exists so long as it can pay a dividend and no longer. The "social service state," such is Professor Laski's adequate description of the present régime, depends in his view "for its continuance on its ability to find a constantly expanding market in which profit can be obtained." When that condition is unfulfilled, the state cannot hope to obtain a majority except at the price of a surrender to the electorate of individual rights deemed sacred by its capitalist supporters. Professor Laski argues his case forcibly, and, as I say, fairly enough. He is sometimes ungenerous in his attribution of motives, however, and frankly prejudiced in his consideration of alternative systems of government. Indeed, he is a victim of the popular delusion that Socialism is the only alternative to the present capitalist régime. Herein lies the importance of this small book for Conservative politicians. By reading it they can learn how completely they have failed to impress even the educated public with Conservatism as a constructive force capable of meeting the present crisis.

The Failure of Capitalist Democracy

SO far from being the only, Socialism is one of the least probable alternatives to the present régime. But that is hardly the material point for those Conservatives who are pledged to capitalist democracy. An analysis of

* Allen & Unwin. 6s. net.

the division on the vote of censure on unemployment suggests, unfortunately, that the whole of the Conservative party in the House of Commons consider themselves so pledged. If so, it is regrettable, for they are pledging their support to a system of government which has undertaken to provide security and a minimum standard of living, and has failed notably to do either. That is no reason in logic why we should intensify its defects by passing from capitalist democracy to socialism, but it is every reason, as Professor Laski points out, why the electorate should turn against the present system, unless those responsible for its ordering show themselves aware of its defects and determined to remove them, however drastic the necessary remedies. For the electorate is interested only in results. It claims either economic independence or equality, and security. The social service State has gravely prejudiced the first claim, denies the second claim and has so far quite failed to meet the third.

The Possible Alternatives

TO say this, is not, however, to accept for one minute Professor Laski's claim that socialism is inevitable. He assumes that the only question is whether Socialism is to come constitutionally or by a *coup d'état.* He seems quite unaware of the widespread detestation of the State which is growing up, or of the elementary psychological fact that men prefer independence to either equality or security. Given the chance of a new age of relative freedom and genuine opportunity, there is not one man in four who will willingly choose to live instead under the eye and thumb of the State. The trouble is that we have gone so far on the road to Socialism that it will take about as many years of ceaseless legislation to make men free as to make them permanent slaves, and at every step such legislation will be opposed by vested interests bitterly opposed to reflation, to the restoration of agriculture, to the removal of subsidies

and to all legislation tending to a redistribution of property.

The Crisis in Conservatism

CONSERVATISM, nevertheless, is approaching a crisis. The present discontent and distrust of the younger Conservative members of the House of Commons in the party leadership was shown in the chilling reception given to Mr. Neville Chamberlain's speech in the recent unemployment debate. But if no speech within living memory has been so badly received, few have been endorsed by a bigger majority. There is something gravely wrong here. Far be it from us to deny that, in this attitude, the Conservative party thereby reflects the nation. But the nation asks for leaders, not reflectors. A leaderless nation is a nation ripe for revolution. No one desires to minimize the difficulties of the present Government. It is hard for them, though only as a matter of courtesy, to decide on their currency policy in advance of the American debt negotiations; it is probable that any satisfactory agricultural long-term policy would split the Cabinet; the oil interests would bitterly oppose a national fuel policy on constructive lines. A foreign policy devoted to the furtherance of British interests, the consolidation of Western European opinion, and the restoration of the rule of law would antagonize the free churches. And so on and so forth. But these four things, currency, agriculture, coal and foreign policy are the outworks of the present depression. They must be captured before the battle with unemployment can be joined with any hope of success. The public must be told if those Conservatives who have a policy in these matters are prepared to advocate it: otherwise they will assume the contrary.

The Silence of Conservatives

SILENCE upon these topics is incompatible with the survival of parliamentary government. They are

what are uppermost in men's minds, and if what fills men's minds is not spoken in a parliament elected by universal suffrage, men will quickly come to feel that Parliament is a sham. We are a patient nation; we are still prepared to face a realist appreciation of the situation, and to act on it. But a mere policy of negation convinces no one of its necessity. A government of Micawbers is an uninspiring spectacle and when men are angry they are apt to throw stones at public spectacles which they find uninspiring. The government were right a hundred times over in rejecting the temptation to waste a few hundred million on relief work and other futilities. There is no argument in favour of these frivolities which is worth a moment's consideration. But this fact does not and cannot justify a policy of general negation in regard to currency, land and coal; still less does it justify the silence of the back benchers on whom lies the heavy responsibility of showing the country that Conservatism has a constructive policy as an alternative to Socialism and to the present régime alike. So astute a political student as Professor Laski is quite obviously unaware of the existence of any constructive Conservative teaching on these matters. We can hardly blame him if he relies on Hansard for his information. Yet what is wanted is, above all, thinking in public. The public are sick to death of good intentions. It wants passionately to know if there is any one except the Socialists with a constructive proposal. How long must the public wait?

The Redistribution of Property

MR. Hilaire Belloc has, unfortunately, been prevented by illness from continuing his series of articles on the Redistribution of Property. He hopes to be able to do so next month.

Cricket in Australia

THE end of the fourth test match which gave England the rubber must have been hailed with relief by

nine people out of ten. What with the faked sensationalism, the pseudo-dramatic headlines, the fuss and bad temper, the idiotic spectacle of elderly cricketers making statesman-like speeches about the crisis, for all the world as if they were at Geneva, the whole business had become disgusting. While Mr. Warner prayed for peace, other people were praying for silence. Now that silence has come, perhaps it will last long enough for the people concerned to address their minds to the only points in the whole controversy which are relevant. Did our bowlers bowl at the man? And if so, is it legal to do so? And if so, should the laws be altered? The question of precedent and the question of danger are both irrelevant. The charge made is a quite definite one—bowling at the batsman a ball at such a pace and of such a length that the batsman to defend himself has to risk giving a catch to one of the army of fieldsmen on the leg side. The first point to be decided is one of fact. If the facts are as suggested, the remedy is as obvious as it is necessary. But if the batsman can, in fact, defend himself by a reasonable exercise of skill, then it is equally obvious that no remedy is necessary. The M.C.C. will, we hope, consider the question when it next comes before them in a realistic spirit.

The American Debt Negotiations

WE publish in this number an important article on the Anglo-American debt negotiations. We do not agree wholly with our contributor's analysis of United States opinion. We think Anglo-Saxon sentiment to be stronger than he suggests.

About the two cardinal aims in American debt policy, however, there is no difference of opinion in informed circles. The first is to secure a settlement, because the democrats realize that otherwise they will get nothing, and the second is to get as much as possible in the way of a *quid pro quo* in return for the immense

paper sacrifices which they will have to make. This attitude is perfectly reasonable. In similar circumstances our Government would do the opposite, but that is no condemnation of President Roosevelt. The United States will ask for tariff concessions and for an undertaking to return to gold at a figure in the neighbourhood of $3·30 to the £ sterling. If we assume the present value of the £ to be approximately $3·50, it is obvious that such an undertaking as suggested debars us from any effective measures for raising the internal price level in terms of sterling, and leaves us with the nugatory hope of a large rise in gold prices as the only way out of our troubles. No responsible Government will therefore be able to pledge itself to any such action. Tariff concessions are equally unlikely to be feasible. The most possible basis of agreement would be the monetization of silver. There is a long tradition of Democratic party opinion in favour of this course, which would materially assist reflation on both sides of the Atlantic. On this basis a common front might be devised which would at least yield one constructive proposal for the World Economic Conference.

Debts and the Continent

THE graver problem is the one never referred to—the future of reparations. It seems assumed by most people that the debts problem is now one between this country and the United States, but it is probable that any such bi-lateral settlement would lead to the re-opening of the European question shelved at Lausanne. In that case the relations between France and Germany might well be strained to breaking point, especially if Germany is really meditating an attack on Poland. This possibility is remote, but not wholly impossible. The policy of Jugoslavia may well be a determining factor for peace or war and the precedents are not happy. In the circumstances England will be well advised to do nothing in regard to the American debt settlement which might provide any nation in Europe with excuse for an

aggressive policy directed against the framework of the peace treaties, or which might add to the anxieties of nations like France who stand to lose everything and gain nothing if the disaster of war occurs. One redeeming feature in the situation is that Englishmen of all shades of opinion have at last begun to understand that France stands for peace, not for war, that her policy is not and never will be aggressive, and that any movement against her frontiers will be an unprovoked outrage which, if not ruthlessly checked, would spell the end of peace for more than a generation.

The Little Entente.

THE closer understanding between Roumania, Czecho-slovakia, and Jugo-Slavia which has been reached during the past fortnight is the result of three events, the accession of the Nazis to power, the Franco-Russian Pact, and M. de Jouvenel's mission to Italy. The first of these affects Prague, the second Bucharest, and the third Belgrade. Those who feel themselves in danger of hanging separately are liable to hang together.

What remains to be seen is whether the agreement is not too late. Jugo-Slavia and Roumania are unstable in the extreme, and this alignment is bound to have the effect of alienating France, which might even pass into the revisionist camp. As for Poland, there is no reason why she should join the Little Entente now. She might strengthen it, but it would only weaken her. In short, this new understanding seems likely to prove ten years too late.

DOUGLAS JERROLD.

The World Crisis and the English Tradition

By Christopher Dawson

THE crisis that has arisen in the modern world during the post-war period is not merely an economic one. It involves the future of Western culture as a whole, and, consequently, the fate of humanity. But it is not a simple or uniform phenomenon. It is not confined to any one state or any one continent. It is world-wide in its incidence and shows itself in a different form in every different society. The problem of Russia is essentially different from that of America, and that of Germany from that of England. And yet all are inextricably interwoven in an immense and complicated tangle which politicians and economists are vainly struggling to unravel.

Hence it is useless to hope to find the solution of the world crisis in some simple remedy that can be applied to every society indifferently. The problem is a real one and it cannot be solved by the manipulation of credit and currency. It is a question of how to adjust the traditional forms of social and political order which are the result of a long and gradual process of historical evolution to the new economic forces that have transformed the world during the last century, and above all during the last forty years.

Thus each people has to find the individual solution that is in conformity with its own sociological and historical structure. And nowhere is this more necessary than in England, for while the English situation is one of the key positions of the world crisis, it has no exact analogy with anything that exists in any other country. It shows a peculiarly abrupt contrast between a highly individual national culture and an exceptionally highly developed system of world trade and finance. England is at once the most national and insular in its cultural tradition and the most cosmopolitan in its economic and

imperial position. In this it resembles Rome, the peasant State that became the organizer of a world empire and the centre of a cosmopolitan civilization.

And as the development of Roman culture was late and backward in comparison with the Hellenic world, so was it with the English national culture as compared with that of continental Europe. The development of a native English culture was checked by the Norman Conquest, and during the best part of the Middle Ages England was under the dominion of an alien culture that had its roots across the channel. England first began to become herself in the fourteenth century, when the mediæval unity was passing away, and it was only in the three centuries that followed the Renaissance and the Reformation that the English national culture acquired its characteristic form.

At that time civilization on the Continent was following in a remarkable way in the footsteps of the great Mediterranean civilization of the past. Renaissance Italy inherited the traditions of Hellenism, while Spain and Baroque Austria and the France of Louis XIV inherited the Roman-Byzantine tradition of State absolutism and sacred monarchy. But in England there is no room for such comparisons. Partly, though not entirely, as a result of the Reformation, she remained apart from the main current of European life, following her own path and jealously guarding against any influence from outside, somewhat after the fashion of Japan in the Far East during this very period. Her development was, in fact, the exact opposite to that of Germany during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, open as the latter was to all the cultural and political currents in Europe, receiving French influence from across the Rhine, Italian influence through Austria, and Swedish influence from the Baltic.

It was this accentuation of her island position which was the essential condition of England's achievement. She was a little world, secure behind the guardian barrier of the narrow seas, the most peaceful land in Europe,

almost the only spot in the world that was free from the constant menace of war and invasion. Hence there was a general relaxation of tension in the social organism. There was no need for the rigid centralization, the standing armies, the bureaucratic organization, which on the Continent were absolutely necessary for national survival. And so, while in other countries culture concentrated itself in cities and in the courts of kings, in England it spread itself abroad over the open country. A new type of civilization grew up that was not urban or courtly, but essentially rural and based upon the life of the family.

It was this characteristic that was the source of the exceptional stability and strength of the English social organism which so impressed continental observers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. On the Continent ever since the time of the Roman Empire every people and every state was divided within itself by a duality of culture. On the one hand, there were the traditions of the court and the city which, finally, after the Renaissance, fused with one another; on the other the peasant tradition, which to a greater or less extent preserved an older and more primitive culture and possessed its own art, its own costume, its own social customs, almost its own laws. We have an extreme instance of this in Russia during the last two centuries, where the contrast of the French-speaking official or courtier of Petersburg, living by the culture of modern Europe, and the patriarchal peasant, living in a half-Slavonic, half-Byzantine, wholly mediæval world, was so intense as to be unbearable, and ultimately caused the dissolution of Russian society. But in England, at least since the close of the Middle Ages, there has been no such contrast. Our society and culture have been single and homogeneous. We have not had a special peasant art and costume because our whole culture has been a rural culture. That characteristic figure, the eighteenth-century squire, was not the member of a noble class as was even the smallest German baron or French count, he

was a glorified yeoman. No doubt he, too, was sometimes an oppressor, but he was never a stranger, and when he was most high-handed, as in the enclosure of the commons, he was fighting the last stage of the peasant's long battle for the Plough against the Waste. Like Tennyson's Lincolnshire Farmer, he thought that a few moral deficiencies would be overlooked in the man who "stubbed Thurnaby Waste."

Thus the English culture and the social discipline that went with it were not a civilization imposed from above, but grew up from below out of the very soil of England. When all the great States of the Continent were shaken by revolution and disorder, England alone stood firm and preserved an unbroken continuity with her past. Her constitution was not a paper document, based on the most admirable abstract principles and entirely altered every few years, it was herself; she could not throw it aside any more than a man can discard his own personality.

One of the most original Catholic sociologists of the nineteenth century, Frederic Leplay, devoted a work to the study of English society. He had been impressed when first he visited England in 1836 by the stability of the social organism and by the weakness of the forces of irreligion and disorder which were then in the ascendant throughout Western Europe; and he found the source of England's greatness in the characteristics that we have just described. It was not simply the strength of family life and the home, but the way in which a whole culture and social order had been built up on these foundations. Elsewhere in those households that he studied so devotedly in the six volumes of his *Ouvriers Européens*, he had seen family life that was as strong or stronger, from a moral and economic point of view, but nowhere else was it the centre of the national culture and polity to the same extent as it was in England.

This development had its roots far back in the Middle Ages. Long before the Reformation English society had

begun to acquire its characteristic rural aspect. The English village, with its pacific manor-house and its richly adorned parish church, was already far different from those of the war-harried castle-studded countrysides of France and Germany. But it was only in the centuries which followed the Renaissance that this English society began to bear fruit in an equally distinctive style and culture. How incomparably English are the typical Tudor and Jacobean manor and farmhouse, and how rich is their social content. They make us understand how it was possible for England to produce men like Herrick and Herbert and Henry Vaughan, poets who lived out of the world, far from the possibilities of the city and its culture, but whose art had a purity and freshness as far from that of the poets of the same period in Italy and France as an English meadow from a Neapolitan street.

And with the following century the contrast of English and continental culture become even stronger. It is true that the hard brilliance and rationalism of the French eighteenth century had its parallel here in Pope and Bolingbroke, and later in Chesterfield and Gibbon, but the victory was not with them. More and more their spirit was felt to be alien, their spiritual home was at Paris and Lausanne. The heart of England was with the solid traditionalism of Dr. Johnson or the intense pietism of Cowper and the Wesleys. Moreover, the coming of the house of Hanover, so far from introducing continental influences, served rather to weaken the prestige of the court and to make the country more obstinately English than ever. Neither our society nor our art served the court and the capital, both alike centred in the family, in the country houses or in the homes of the merchants. And this is true of both the chief manifestations of English art during this period, the great portrait painters and the late Georgian school of architecture and decoration, of which the typical representatives are the brothers Adam.

In the latter the English tradition has reached maturity. It is no longer purely rural, it has begun to

impress its image on the town and on urban life. The ordinary London house of this type, with the reserved severity of its exterior and the intimate refinement and grace of the interior, is a true type of the society that produced it. A society whose civilization was essentially private, bound up with the family and the home, and which brings with it even into the city and its suburbs something of the quiet and retirement of the countryside. It is the complete antithesis of the Latin social ideal, which is communal and public, which finds its artistic expression in the baroque town square, with its fountains and statuary and monumental façades, a fitting background to the open-air life of a many-coloured voluble crowd.

So if one compares the London of a hundred years ago, when this English culture was still practically intact, with the great cities of the Continent with their ancient tradition of a splendid civic life, the comparison is at first all in their favour. In England there was a rustic individualism and boorishness which sink at times to downright callousness and brutality, as in the penal code and the treatment of the poor. But as soon as we leave public life and look behind the severe and sometimes dingy façade, what treasures does the interior life of that late Georgian London reveal! The harvest of Renaissance Florence was greater, may be, but there the resources of a brilliant court called together the talent of all Italy. In London it was a spontaneous flowering from the poorest and most unpromising soil. Blake, Keats, Charles Lamb, Thomas Girtin, and the Varleys, Turner and Dickens, were all of them poor men, for the most part completely without any of the advantages of birth or education. Yet each of them is unique, each of them is a voice of England, and some of their work possesses the same unearthly beauty and spirituality which marked English poetry in the seventeenth century.

But with the close of the Georgian period a profound change begins to pass over English society. England

ceases to be an agrarian State, and the new industry, which had been developing for more than half a century, becomes the dominant element in the life of the nation. The centre of gravity shifts from the village and the country house to the industrial town, the mine and the factory.

This change was not a gradual modification of the older non-industrial civilization, it was an independent growth. For the new industry developed in just those districts of England that were most backward and farthest removed from the centres of the old culture. Great masses of population began to settle on the wild moorlands of north-western England and in the valleys of the Welsh hills, and new cities grew up, like mushrooms, without plan and forethought, without corporate responsibility or civic tradition. Thus two Englands stood over against one another without social contact. As long as the Georgian era lasted the old England still ruled, and the new nation of industrial workers lived a disfranchised existence as a mere wealth-producing caste. Then came the ferment of the years after the Napoleonic War, the rise of Liberalism and the passing of the Reform Bill. Finally, with the repeal of the Corn Laws, the old rural England passed into the background, and a new financial industrial state took its place.

Thus the nineteenth century and the Victorian age can be looked on from two points of view : as the last phase of the old rural domestic culture—the culmination of the English tradition; or as the revolt against it—the growth of a new urban-industrial civilization with its centre in the group-work of the mine and the factory, bringing with it the disintegration of the family into a number of independent wage earners and the degeneration of the home into a workers' dormitory.

Yet, in spite of all, the English were faithful to their old ideal. The clerk and the workman clung to their rural tradition of a separate home, and the English industrial town to this day stands apart from its fellows on the

Continent as a separate type by reason of its square miles of little brick boxes—each the home of a single family—in which it houses its workers. But a tree cannot continue to bear fruit, even of this stunted and unbeautiful kind, when the roots are gone. With the twentieth century we see the coming of a new urban civilization, which has no contact with the English tradition. The old ideals have grown discredited, and the Englishman no longer disdains to dwell in flats. And with the flat comes a corresponding new anti-domestic ethos; divorce, birth control, the turning to outer society for all vital needs.

England, in fact, has been going through the same social crisis as ancient Rome experienced at the end of the Republic.

Rome, too, had been founded on the life of the family and the rural community, and the loss of the agrarian foundations of Roman society caused a profound revolution in Roman culture and in the Roman polity. The national Roman tradition was only saved by an immense effort for social regeneration which was, indeed, only partially successful. And the parallel is all the more instructive, because in both cases the essential problem was the same—namely, how to reconcile the national tradition of an agrarian state with the imperial responsibilities of a world empire.

For in modern England, no less than in ancient Rome, the disintegration of the agrarian foundations of the old national culture was accompanied by the formation of a great imperial state. As Rome unified the Mediterranean world by her work of military conquest and organization, so England by her maritime and commercial expansion became the great organizer of the new cosmopolitan economic unity. Everywhere in the nineteenth century the English financiers, engineers, colonists, explorers, seamen and administrators were breaking down the geographical, social and economic barriers that separated continents and civilizations, and were binding the world together by an intricate structure of world trade and

world finance on the summit of which the new English industrial society was poised. We have a classical example of this in the Lancashire cotton industry, depending as it did on the three-fold relation of American raw material, English industry and Oriental markets, bound together by English shipping and financial organization, and secured by English sea power and imperial administration. Nevertheless, this new economic imperialism was not the result of the unaided enterprise of the new industrial society. Its foundations had already been laid in the eighteenth century by the old agrarian state. The British Empire owes its creation not to the England of the millowners, but to the England of the squires, the England of Walpole and the Pitts, which also produced the merchants and the seamen who created the East India Company and the mercantile marine. The spirit of the new society is to be seen in the cosmopolitan Free Trade ideals of the Manchester school, which disavowed the old mercantile imperialism, even though it actually owed to it the possibility of its own existence. And, consequently, these ideals never dominated English policy. The prosperity of nineteenth-century England was due to a working compromise between the two societies and the two traditions which is represented by the Free Trade imperialism of Palmerston and Disraeli, a compromise which was essentially unstable since it concealed latent contradictions.

To-day these contradictions have worked themselves out, and the instability of the nineteenth-century compromise is patent to all. It is no longer possible to reconcile Free Trade and imperialism or to combine the old national agrarian tradition with that of a completely industrialized society. The English achievement is threatened both within and without: within, by the almost complete dissolution of the rural life from which our national culture derived its inner vitality; and without, by the crumbling of the whole edifice of world trade and world finance on which the economic prosperity

of English industrialism was based. Consequently, we seem faced by a dilemma between two alternatives, each of which promises to be equally disastrous. Either we can attempt to restore the agrarian foundations of our culture by a return to agricultural self-sufficiency, in which case we destroy the economic foundation of the urban industrialism by which the vast majority of our population lives; or we can sacrifice everything to maintaining the cosmopolitan mechanism of world industry and trade, which would mean the final destruction not only of our agriculture, but of our national tradition and our social vitality.

While the spread of industrialism and its growing perfection of technique are steadily increasing the volume of actual and potential production, the world market is being increasingly restricted by economic nationalism and the political control of trade. England is faced with the prospect of being the workshop of a world that does not need her services. At the very moment when the existence of the world market is being threatened, our whole population is becoming dependent on the world market for its very existence. English agriculture is at its last gasp, and any serious effort to revive it would be opposed by the united forces of capital and labour as involving either a rise in the costs of labour or a decline in the standard of living.

But if we cannot afford the economic cost of preserving our agricultural population, can we afford the social cost of destroying it? It is impossible to decide the question by purely economic considerations. A landlord might find it more profitable to clear his estate of its farming population and to let it to a game syndicate, but that does not mean that it would be in the national interest for him to do so. And in the same way our present abundant supplies of cheap food may be bought too dear, if they involve the sacrifice of the agrarian foundation of our national culture. The land of England is not just a food factory that can be dismantled at will, it is a part of

ourselves, and if it becomes derelict, our whole social life is maimed. The first consideration for a society is not to maintain the volume of its industrial production or even "the standard of life" in the current sense of the expression, but the quality of its population, and that cannot be secured by the mere expenditure of money on the so-called "social services," but only by the preservation of the natural foundations of society: the family and the land.

It is, of course, obvious that we cannot disregard economic factors, and that a society which cannot pay its way cannot exist. Nevertheless, the system that produces the largest profits is not necessarily the most efficient in the long run, even from the economic point of view. A purely urban industrialism is at its best a wasteful system, for it destroys the natural mechanism of social life, and is forced to construct at immense cost an artificial mechanism to take its place. For example, under the old order the land-owning class was also the ruling class, and provided the permanent *cadres* from which the administrators and the servants of the state were recruited. But in an industrial state the wealthy class is a plutocracy that possesses no definite social function, and a separate governing class of paid bureaucrats has to be created and trained at the expense of the state. And thus the plutocracy of the industrialist order actually costs the country more than did the old ruling class, while it is decidedly inferior to the latter, from the non-economic point of view, as an organ of national culture.

Such considerations as these, however, have no influence on modern politics, which invariably sacrifice sociology to economics, and which, even in economics, prefer immediate profit to ultimate advantage. Socialism alone possesses any kind of sociology, and it derives considerable advantage from the fact. But it is a naïve and rudimentary sociology which shuts its eyes to the existence of any but economic values, and seeks national salvation in the complete subordination of the social organism to

the economic machine. In fact, Socialism and industrial capitalism both share the same economic fallacy and the same urbanist and mechanical ideals: both alike lead to the disintegration of the social organism and to the destruction of its agrarian foundation.

If England is to be saved, it is necessary to abandon the economic fatalism that has dominated our thought for a hundred years and to base our national policy on sound sociological principles. We must recognize that our national culture is our greatest asset, and the true foundations of society are to be found neither in commerce nor in financial and industrial mechanism, but in nature.

Instead of exploiting nature for financial profit and forcing society into the strait waistcoat of a mechanical order, we must adapt our economic mechanism to the needs of the social organism and the safeguarding of its vital functions. Science and technology can be used in the service of rural life as well as of urban industry, and the recovery of some measure of equilibrium between the agrarian and the urban elements in our national life would strengthen the whole structure of the social organism. It is true that we cannot transform England into a self-sufficient peasant State, but it is possible to restore the life of the English countryside if we seriously wished to do so. The obstacles to recovery are not merely economic, they are also, and in an even greater degree, political and social. If, in the England of the eighteenth century, the towns were governed in the interests of the country, to-day the country is governed in the interests of the towns, and rural society is forced to adapt itself to the educational and social legislation that is a product of the utterly different social environment of urban industrialism. And at the same time the rural society is being deprived of social leadership. The old land-owning class filled so large a place in rural society that its disappearance leaves an immense gap in the social and cultural life of the countryside, and nothing is being done to fill it, owing to the concentration of all the vital forces of the nation in

the great cities. Here again there is a pressing need for the restoration of social equilibrium by a measure of cultural decentralization and by a more even distribution of the non-economic resources of the nation between city and countryside. And all these changes are not merely desirable : they are absolutely necessary if England is to survive.

No civilization hitherto has been able to resist the destructive effects of urban and bureaucratic centralization. It has been well said that the great city is the grave of a culture, and in the same way the substitution of a centralized bureaucratic control for the spontaneous activity of normal social life involves a process of ossification and the senile decay of the whole social organism.

The only question is whether the process has already gone too far to be checked in this country. There is no *a priori* reason why a society should not recover its health and social stability by reversing the drift towards centralization and deliberately strengthening its foundations in the life of the family and the country. But such a movement of social regeneration requires a vigorous moral effort and a consciousness of our responsibility. We cannot do anything so long as we are hypnotized by economic fatalism and so long as we cannot free ourselves from the decaying remains of nineteenth-century philosophy. It is necessary for us to revise our whole scheme of social values and to educate the nation in the ideas that have some relation to the realities of the modern situation. The work of social restoration must be preceded and accompanied by the reconstruction of our intellectual and spiritual traditions.

Safety Last

By Sir Ernest Benn

"IS modern life really represented in the modern novel? Is promiscuity as common as fiction would have us believe?"

The question was addressed to a young married person, and the answer was brief, conclusive and, for the times in which we live, perfectly honest. "Well, IT'S QUITE SAFE."

Here was surely the quintessence of the Safety First philosophy which in a brief decade or two has completely transformed almost everything which used to go to make up life. Everybody must now be safe; no risk must be left with the individual. Chastisement, penalties are gone, causes must have no effects. The safety is not something which the individual must win for himself; it is provided for him; it is there as his right; he is entitled to go through life in the full enjoyment of whatever is "according to his needs."

The theory runs right through everything we try to do. It is the foundation of the policy which makes France a continuing menace to the world; it is the basis of the Russian Five-Year Plan, and is seen in its milder forms in our schemes for feeding school-children, providing unemployment pay, or saving agriculture. Safety is the new god; deserts, endeavour, quality, struggle, no longer count; the need for them can be organized away, and everybody can be safe. And so, finally, naturally, and quite logically, health, nourishment, clothing, shelter, amusement, being assured to everybody, sex becomes a food and, like everything else in life, is now quite safe.

Curiously enough, and much more difficult to follow, this revolution—for it is nothing less—is all mixed up with a supposed revolt against the materialism of the past. In the days when man had to justify his position, materialism was thought to be rampant; but to-day, when safety needs no justification, when rights have

taken the place of responsibilities, when risks have become historical and safety the common lot, altruism is supposed to have ousted the materialism of a less enlightened age.

What humbug! What outrageous nonsense!

The worker who delivered the goods before receiving his reward, the schoolboy who faced for himself the alternatives of a prize or a thrashing, the nation which made itself secure, the adulterer who faced the risks of ostracism and disease, the industry which made its own security against competition, and all the others who recognized that life is a struggle with the forces of nature, are upbraided with materialism. Altruism, such is the perversion of the times, is awarded only to those who decline to work without a pension (and consequently can never know the nature of work), who steal a living by legislation, who devise regulations for the conduct of others, who fill the gap between good and evil with formulæ, who know how to spend but have forgotten the meaning of payment, who have reduced love to a conversational exercise and life to a protocol. Right and wrong have disappeared, and safety has been enthroned as the supreme consideration.

It is too little realized that life is a whole—that economics and ethics, and all the other ics and isms, are only little parts which fit together, all belong to one another and are all subject to the play of the eternal forces of good and evil.

All these arrangements for saving the fool from the consequences of his folly only make him a greater fool and lead to more serious folly. Whether the scheme be concerned with easier divorce or the cure of national bankruptcy by a League of Nations loan, we discover eventually that nature is unalterable, and that we only make more wrong by attempting to relieve wrong of its inherent safeguards, and therefore always defeat our demoralizing object. And it is right and necessary, inevitable and good that it should be so.

The Utopian altruism of the Safety First philosophy leaves out of account the individual and his soul. It ignores the spiritual value of danger and risk. It forgets the man who provides the supposed safety as well as the personal position of the unfortunate safeguarded. Both have accounts to square with conscience, but conscience has no part in modernism. Man as an individual is fortified with natural safeguards against sin; man in the mass, unionism, democracy possess no such advantage. The Treasury embargo on new issues or the Churches' demand for more rates and taxes, or most of the things which we do in the irresponsible name of the people as distinguished from the man, are merely attempts, all of them doomed to eventual failure, to avoid the consequences of prior folly.

Some day, perhaps too late to save our present civilization, the Churches will come back to "visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation." There is, indeed, a gleam of hope in the possibility of unsuspected wisdom in the limitation of the curse to the fourth generation, for that gives us a sufficient length of time in which to wipe out the iniquity of a thousand millions of housing debt represented by nothing but expensive embryonic slums. Modern politics all based on the "something for nothing," "safety first" idea, will then give place to a nobler conception of which even an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth will form some part. There is no safety except in right, no life worth living except it be based on a true conception of justice, no good that forgets liberty, no prize that is given and not won.

Good is the conquest over evil, not the absence of evil. There would be no virtue in solvency were bankruptcy made impossible. Loss and suffering are the foundations of gain and enjoyment, and if the individual could be provided with the latter and be kept in ignorance of the former he would quickly trace his

steps back and range himself below the animal or even the plant. Safety increases as the form of life gets lower.

In the realms of politics and economics the safety bubble is about to burst. Many well-meaning people still look with pleasure upon what appears to be an improvement in the standard of general living. People are safer, that is to say, they have better houses, more money, cleaner streets, more newspapers, and they work and worry less. Acts of Parliament have made two blades appear to grow where only one grew before. When, however, the truth comes out—and that time is arriving—and we know that we have not only spent the savings of our grandfathers, but also mortgaged the earnings of our grandchildren, there will be a new revolution in thought and a rebirth of heart and soul. Our false, shallow altruism will give place to distressing repentance. The Safety which we have stolen from our grandchildren will be recognized as the immoral thing that it is; we shall spend our days in strenuous endeavour to pay at least as much of our debts as we can. We shall think less about our safety and more about the safety of the future, and when that happens the world will begin again to go forward.

The Critics III. The Poet-Critic

By Humbert Wolfe

THEN for one last example let us ponder
that patch of light (or is it mist?) up yonder.
"You bid us search the mountain?" "Aye! look well"
"We have well looked but naught is visible."
"Then look again to where, beyond the firs,
youngest of morning's fleecy messengers
a cloud dipped with the Tyrian dyes by the sun
marks where the trees have halted, the snows begun."
"Still we see naught but a mote flickering
less than the shadow of a swallow's wing."
"Or might it be the mountain-shadow thrown
by one who walks deliberately alone,
too sheer for foot to follow, almost too high
against the sun for the snow-dazzled eye,
the poet's path whose dangerous pavement is
between the morning and the precipice."
"Not man it seems but bird—the mountain raven,
nor warm with feathers, but by an etcher graven
in a dull black that glitters indigo
against the absolute metallic snow."
"Yet closelier look where the great glacier ends!"
"Aye 'tis a man that musingly descends."
"And with sure foot which treads the perilous height
with the free step of one who climbs by right."
"Now we can see the slender figure, now
the vague precipitous hair, the broad pale brow,
and now behold his lips that seem to move
not with their own but by the breath of Love."
"See to his cloak!" "How Hamlet-like he stands
tossing the bubble-life between his hands
this way and that with high indifference
to all but what in beauty calls him hence."
"He reads upon a paper. Listen only!"
"How cold his voice and with what distance lonely!"
"Yet listen to the music with which he snares
the dark with his as nightingales with theirs."
"Strange words they seem!" "Yet listen while he reads"

" A little poison is what England needs,
and poison delicately administered
by one not to be seen but only heard.
The poets grow rank, the Muse with none to prick its
festers lies tangled in the nettled thickets,
while common hucksters with a mind as lewd as
their master's mouth her with the kiss of Judas.
The times are out of joint. O wretched spite
that I'm compelled by stealth to set them right,
and forced, although an English gentleman,
to use the methods of the Ku Klux Klan.
My heart is all Don Quixote. I would ride
into the dream of the moon at eventide
as lucid in my transience, nor less
mailed against time in argent loneliness.
O what a doom that in the heart's denial
this hand should trickle venom from a phial
into the sleeping ear, preserve romance
by tilting (muffled) with a poisoned lance,
that I, by heaven cast for Philip Sidney
stab from behind in the region of the kidney.
Milton ! thou should'st be living at this hour !
But, failing Milton, may the fates empower
the last St. George to slip the garotter's bag on
the scaly head of the unconscious dragon."
" And so he passes on." " Can such things be?
He might have answered not unworthily
the great Elizabethan—and instead,
as though the very meaning of song were dead
uses the lips that beauty framed for it
as might an adder or a cat to spit.
Is this the poet-critic? Then adieu
to what young Shelley guessed and Shakespeare knew,
and let the hate returned but unrequited
blot every lantern that the stars have lighted,
and draw across our eyes the cloak of Hell
in the last damned and damnable farewell."
" Nay ! do not look so pale. Did you not know
pessima optimi corruptio."

The Principles of the Corporate State

By Harold Goad

AFTER some ten years of successful development in Italy the Corporate State may surely be regarded as one of the two most important political experiments of recent times. Hitherto far too little attention has been paid to it in England, whereas excessive interest has constantly been shown in the apparently unsuccessful political experiment of Communism in Russia. From Italy England to-day has far more to learn than from Russia, if only for the reason that the Italian race is far nearer to our own in temperament, civilization and historical tradition.

It is above all necessary to begin an account of the machinery of the Corporate State by carefully distinguishing it from the general movement of the Fascist Revolution, and the institutions arising out of that revolution, such as the "Fascist Party," with its closely-knit hierarchy depending from the Grand Fascist Council as from a sort of General Staff. This "Fascist Party" is little more to-day than an honourable order of those who from the first supported the Revolution. Similarly, combatant Fascist bands, that fought down the Communists, have long ago been converted into the National Militia. The Special Tribunal for the trial of political offences under the law for the defence of the State may also be included among these revolutionary institutions; and here one should remember that the recent Amnesty has released the majority of the condemned. Again, the so-called "censorship," or control of the Press, is gradually relaxing with the growth of the new association of responsible journalists. The dictatorship of Signor Mussolini is the coping-stone of these emergency institutions, and it is in these institutions that the dictatorship principally resides to-day. But the Corporate State is rapidly removing the need for

these essentially revolutionary institutions, which must for this reason be carefully studied to be distinguished from the permanent Constitutional machinery.

It is under the shelter of this framework of the revolutionary institutions, and assisted by the great wave of patriotic inspiration that this new constitution has been developed from certain industrial beginnings, unique, original, organic. But it is essentially independent of these institutions, and it should be studied apart from them, because it contains many elements and devices that are of universal application, and eminently adapted to contemporary industrial conditions.

Let us glance first at the origins of the industrial machinery from which the Corporate State developed.

In the economic chaos following the War, when the constant fall in value of the currency made frequent readjustment of wages and prices inevitable, lock-outs and strikes became so chronic as to threaten to destroy the productive power of the nation, and to deprive it of the means of sustenance. In consequence, certain groups emerged, consisting of both employers and employed, landlords and peasants, which pooled their common interests, forming together what were then known as "mixed syndicates"; and these latter differed from one another in the various provinces, both in construction and political colour. The chief characteristic of such groups was that they utterly rejected all internecine strife, such as strikes and lock-outs, and also the folly of class war. Each syndicate considered problems of prices, marketing, profits and so forth, which primarily concerned the employers, as well as those of wages, hours of work, and labour conditions, which primarily concerned the employees. These syndicates were so successful that they soon became the predominant factor in Italian industry, and absorbed, or froze out of existence, the old pre-war political trade unions. After the March on Rome these syndicates claimed from the government of Signor Mussolini recognition, and the establishment of official

labour courts to deal with all disputes that they could not settle within themselves. This was granted by the Government under special conditions, for instance, that advantages gained in all such settlements should be applicable to the whole category of workmen engaged in the same occupation, that the syndical fees should not exceed one day's pay in a year, and that no dispute could be brought into court until all direct means of settlement were exhausted. Next, an elaborate industrial hierarchy for the whole nation was created, local workmen's syndicates being built up into associations of syndicates, associations and national associations, on the one hand, and local employers' associations were formed into federations and national federations on the other; there were six of each kind in all, and they were finally brought together in pairs under government control in six great government organs known as National Corporations, which represented the six principal divisions of national production. A seventh similar organ was afterwards created to embody the syndicates of professional workers.

These National Corporations are joined together in the National Council of Corporations representing all the economic interests in the country—a sort of economic general staff—and in a special Ministry of Corporations, which is one of the most important offices of State. Each Corporation deals with all problems comprised in its component group, often delegating its authority, moreover, to Provincial Councils, whose regulations have legal force. These Provincial Councils regulate and confirm all labour contracts between workmen and employers according to the model contracts recognized in each category, and this whether the contracting parties are members of the recognized syndicates or not. Thus every contract between a wage-earner and an employer throughout the whole nation is public, and must conform to the standard set up in the model contract, and every workingman, as well as every employer, has a definite legal status in the national system, and legal redress

in the case of grievance or injustice. All "sweating" or other form of exploitation is eliminated, and the syndicates are responsible for the quality of the work done by their members. In this way the Italian workman to-day is probably in a better position than any other workingman in Europe.

But it is of even greater importance to notice that the Corporations and their delegations in the Provincial Councils are legislative bodies within their own sphere; they can initiate industrial policy, make statutory legislation, and see that their decrees are carried out, with appeals to the Labour Courts only in cases of insoluble disagreement. Moreover, each Corporation is responsible for the insurance against unemployment, and it therefore has a real responsibility towards the many members that compose it.

This is perhaps the most significant feature to foreign students of the Corporate State. Under a parliamentary democracy organizations representing employers or employed have little incentive to reach agreement with each other and in practice are invariably occupied in attempting to bring over the independent chairman and any independent members there may be to their point of view. The reason for this, of course, is that their bodies have no legislative powers, that all responsibility rests on the central government which in the long run will have to foot the bill by means of a subsidy, tariffs, restriction of imports, bounties on exports and so on, should the recommendation prove beyond the capacity of the industry to bear without State assistance. The position of autonomous responsibility enjoyed by the corporations under the Italian constitution should in theory and does in practice produce a totally different atmosphere.

For the same reasons the Central Legislative body, that is to say the Corporate Chamber, which we shall shortly proceed to describe, consisting as it does of active representatives of employers and employed, is everywhere admitted to be impartial.

Further, representatives of workmen and employers are brought into intimate contact with one another in Provincial Inter-syndical Committees, and in various National Institutes for the promotion or welfare of some particular trade or industry. There is, for instance, a National Milk Institute for the standardization and improvement of milk, cheese and all other lactive products; a National Bread Institute; a National Wine Institute; a National Silk Institute; a National Institution for "Tourism," and another for all kinds of entertainments. In all such institutions, as in the Inter-syndical Committees, questions of wages, compensations and fully-paid holidays, which might divide workmen and employers into rival camps, are discussed together with larger problems, such as marketing, capitalization, division of profits, and the social, as well as economic, welfare of the employed. Thus Capital and Labour, mutually hostile in other countries, are brought into constant co-operation by a common effort for the prosperity of the industry as a whole. Community of interest is continually emphasized, and the nation is assured that no breakdown in the industrial harmony shall disturb the rhythm of productive work. This new "Industrial Constitution" is the foundation of the political Constitution.

Now the Corporate State is unquestionably a new form of Democracy—not the old democracy embodied in parliamentary representation of geographical constituencies, divided by class interest or psychological prejudice into many groups and parties, but a true unitary form of democracy in which the interests of the people, and especially of the people as producers, are duly represented in a single, patriotic corporate body which is the expression of their will; not the will or a compromise between the many wills of each separate class or personal political group, represented independently, but the will of the whole people with its divers and occasionally divergent interests patriotically conciliated and harmonized.

It is this all-inclusive representative organ, known as the Corporate Chamber, which is the principal subject of our consideration, emanating as it does from the harmonization of industrial interests which has just been described.

It is perhaps as well here that we should go down to first principles, for in all controversies that excite political feeling the most important terms are used with different meanings. Now, if we postulate the ideal of President Lincoln, that the word "democracy" implies "government of the people, for the people, by the people," we see that the old Italian parliamentary system was certainly not government *of* the people, for the majority of Italians despised that government, obeyed it only under compulsion, eluding its taxation, thwarting its police and often banding themselves together to make its regulations negligible. Still less was it government *for* the people, for whom little or nothing was done, in days when Italian social services were among the most backward of Europe. Nor was it government *by* the people, but only by a small caucus of professional politicians, who held office through a legal pretence of parliamentary election, chiefly attained by bribery and intimidation.

The first principle of the Fascist theory is that all citizens are in the State and that no individual can be outside it or against it. It follows that the State cannot tolerate the grouping together of individuals for the express purpose of opposing it; the formation of Communist "cells," for example, steadily plotting to undermine its authority, to break the discipline of its soldiers, police and civil servants, to spread disorder by exciting riots, to thwart its policy of production by fomenting strikes and destroying the laborious habits of the working classes, thus causing unnecessary poverty and additional state expenditure upon relief. Indeed, the State, in the Fascist theory, ought not to put up with even a constitutional Opposition, which deliberately withdraws its due co-operation for promoting the success of the government

policy, and by artificial criticism and obstruction endeavours to promote its failure. The first duty of every citizen is to recognize that the head of his government is his representative, to whom he owes loyalty for all public actions done in the name and person of the State. In short, democracy should imply the government of the *whole* people, and be accepted and supported by all.

As for government *for* the people, the record of the present Italian régime is possibly unique in history. It is unnecessary to point to all the public works—roads, railways, land development, water and electric light supplies, workmen's dwellings, hospitals and homes, institutes for maternity and child-welfare, extension of popular education, old-age insurance and so forth—that have been carried through during the last ten years, placing Italy, which was formerly so far behind, in the front rank of countries that are doing most for their poorer classes. By this test unquestionably the ideal of democracy is carried out completely.

Finally comes the question of government *by* the people, which must, of course, be government by representation. But how can this representation best be secured? Not by means of a special class of professional politicians, for either these will have to be drawn from a special class of men of private means—as traditionally has been the case in England—or they will have to make money by the sale of political power while they possess it, since the nature of political representation forbids permanency of employment. Moreover, as the problems that come before Parliament tend to become more and more problems of practical interest concerned with production—commerce, tariffs, currency, finance, education, in short, technical problems of great complexity and vital importance for the economic welfare of millions—it is more and more essential that all the practical interests of the nation should be represented in the Chamber. Each individual producer is more intimately allied to-day with others of his own trade or category

than he is with other citizens who may inhabit the same district through the accident of geographical propinquity in place of residence. Therefore trade constituencies are better suited to be units of representation in the modern conditions of life than the old-fashioned regional constituencies. Trains, telephones, motor-cars, broadcasting and the popular press have annihilated the obstacle of distance; local trade and industrial conditions are more and more tending to be merged into national or even world conditions; then why should an ancient system be perpetuated just because it was necessary before modern inventions revolutionized all social and economic life? Any educated working-man has better means of knowing the character and opinions of a leader of his own trades-union than those of some professional jack-of-all-trades politician who comes out of another sphere and class to address him at some gigantic public meeting; any employer or professional man has real means of knowing the worth and ability of a leading member of his own group or class and deciding whether he may efficiently represent it. Moreover, most important of all, such trade representation eliminates the growing curse of choosing political candidates and political programmes according to party prejudice.

The system by which this object is achieved in Italy deserves to be better known. Names of parliamentary candidates are put forward by every group or union to its National Confederation, of which there are thirteen representing the thirteen principal categories of producers in the country. The National Confederations select a definite number of candidates which they put forward to the Grand Fascist Council, i.e. so many landlords balanced by so many agricultural workers from the two agricultural confederations; so many employers balanced by so many industrial workmen from the two confederations of industry; employers in land or sea transport balanced by railwaymen, roadmen, seamen, and so forth, with a still larger representation of professional men and independent

artisans. Each category has the right to send in a number of names more or less proportionate to its national importance. Out of the 800 names of candidates sent up by the Confederations at the first General Election, the Grand Fascist Council chose 400 and added another 100 representative men who may have been omitted. These 500 candidates formed the National List which was set before the country to approve or reject in what was nothing more nor less than a Vote of Confidence or the reverse. The proceeding is to be repeated every five years.

There is certainly no attempt to put into the Chamber 250 representatives of the working men and 250 representatives of the employers, for that would be to resuscitate within the Chamber a class division which would contradict the whole principle of national unity. The object is to send to Parliament 500 patriotic men of experience and ability, specialists in the needs of special groups, but willing to put the needs of the country before those of any group. The number of candidates named by each group is merely a means of obtaining true representation of every class and every interest; but members are not to be regarded as possessing a mandate for a particular policy, or as being delegates of the particular group that originally nominated them. That they are specialists in one particular form of production or another merely ensures that technical knowledge on that subject should be at the service of the Chamber, when any measure is brought before it that concerns that particular subject. Each member speaks and votes entirely independently, as his personal knowledge, experience and patriotism dictate. There are no restrictions whatever on the expression of his opinion. The natural result of this system is that every proposal or programme, introduced by one of the ministers or one of the Corporations or by a private member, is subject to any amount of criticism and often many amendments are suggested. Speeches are short and without rhetoric, often difficult for the outsider to understand when he reads them as

published in the press or in the Parliamentary Bulletin, which is the Italian equivalent of Hansard. Such speeches have little or no value for the press, which is probably why these debates are almost entirely unreported by foreign correspondents, with the result that outside Italy people seem to think that the Corporate Chamber is a mere cypher or "rubber-stamp," a passive instrument of the so-called "dictatorship." It goes without saying that even the most cursory study of the Parliamentary Bulletin would utterly explode any such misconception.

The Corporate Chamber has times and again criticized, amended or remodelled ministerial measures and rendered inevitable the resignation of a minister. Perhaps the most salient example was that of the attempted amalgamation of local and national financial administration last spring; a measure of policy which excited so much unexpected regional prejudice among the deputies that in spite of the support of the government it had to be withdrawn. Other quite important items of the ministerial programme have been so much amended as to be practically annulled. We may cite the debate on Article 12 of the Constitution of the Ministry of Corporations. Indeed, it is questionable whether any government bills brought into our House of Commons have been so drastically changed after discussion in the House as have been Italian government measures by the Corporate Chamber. But it must always be remembered that such amendments or criticisms are always put forward in a spirit of co-operation and not of opposition or of party. The manifest intention of the critics is to improve such measures, to amend and to render them successful in the aims for which they were put forward. If such amendments, carried in the teeth of ministerial conviction, render untenable—as has often happened—the position of the minister whose duty it will be to carry them into operation, he has no alternative but to resign. But his resignation will not deflect the policy of the government except in the particular detail wherein the official policy

has been changed, and the prestige of the government as a whole will certainly not be affected.

One item of parliamentary procedure that greatly assists in the control of ministerial action by the Corporate Chamber is the Annual Report of each ministry, in the course of which a full account of its programme, with any proposed innovations, is made, generally by the under-secretary of the department, and the budget of expenditure is put forward. Two days are devoted to the discussion of each programme and an opportunity is given to any member or group of members to add to it or amend; the debate being wound up by the minister, who either accepts or rejects the suggestions which, if largely supported, are referred to a commission, to be embodied eventually in a special bill. Thus the whole government policy in every department of state comes annually up for review by the Chamber and is reported in the Press for the education of the electorate. Matters of foreign policy are generally dealt with in greater detail by the Senate, rather than by the Corporate Chamber, as also are matters relating to the Crown, the Church, the Judicature or the Colonies.

Finally, the position of the Fascist Grand Council remains to be considered. It is the chief repository of the principles of the Revolution, and also a sort of enlarged Cabinet. It meets under the Chairmanship of the Head of the Government, and consists of all Ministers of State, Presidents of the Senate and the Chamber, all ex-ministers who since 1922 have served five years in the Government, the Presidents of various national institutions, notably those of the National Corporations, and other important functionaries. From it, on the one hand, depends the whole hierarchy of the Fascist Party; on the other, it is the chief initiator of new legislation. In this second capacity, it ensures a large measure of support for any technical bill before it is introduced, though, generally speaking, its function is to lay down general principles of policy, rather than to deal with technical points.

Safeguarded by this Grand Council, and by a conservative Senate, this new form of "disciplined" or harmonised Democracy, while affording a direct and ever-ready means of expression for the interests and desires of every section of the nation in the Corporate Chamber, is the only form of Democracy that is really "safe for the world." Its clarity and continuity of policy avoids the grave dangers of uncertainty, vacillation, or even oscillation between extremes, which is the consequence of an alternation of parties in power. It abolishes press or popular agitation and speculation on the chances of a change of government. Moreover, the rule of the whole people *by* the whole people eliminates the possibility of subversive disorder, of waves of popular feeling or panic, and fresh revolution engineered by a discontented minority. Furthermore, and most important of all, this form of Democracy includes among its governing motives of policy not only the interests of the present generation, but the historic tradition of the national purpose, and the plans and aspirations of generations that are to come.

The Pacifists' Dilemma

By J. O. P. Bland

WHATEVER may prove to be the ultimate results of the intervention of the League of Nations in the quarrel between China and Japan over Manchuria, this much is certain, that it has served to lay bare and demonstrate beyond all question the inadequacy of the "peace-machinery" upon which the world has been taught to rely by all its post-war seers and oracles since 1918. The collective system of Treaties which, we were assured, was to make acts of aggression and hostilities henceforth impossible—the Covenant of the League, the Locarno Agreements and the Kellogg Pact, etc.—has proved, under the searching test of realities, to be a broken reed. It has failed for the simple reason that (as a few realists pointed out when the League was founded) effective action to restrain or punish aggressors must always depend upon the power to take it; and whatever power the League might on occasion be able to organize or invoke in Europe, it could never hope to bring any restraining force to bear upon disturbers of the peace in the Far East. The Lytton Commission of Enquiry was essentially a tacit recognition of this fact, a time-gaining and face-saving expedient, adopted by the League as a means of escape from the embarrassing position in which it found itself, as the result of its attempt to apply to Japan the collective coercion implicit in the Covenant, while lacking the power to enforce its decisions. The Commission performed its allotted task with commendable skill; nevertheless, its Report reflects, at every stage, the insuperable nature of the problem created by the League's assumption that the "peace-machinery" of the Covenant and the Washington Treaties could be made applicable and valid under the conditions at present existing in China. Japan, in her reply to the Lytton Commission's Report, definitely challenges this assumption, and has based the defence of her proceedings in Manchuria on the broad ground that,

as things are in China, these Treaties and Agreements do not, and cannot, provide any solution of China's differences with other nations. As the Japanese state it, the problem which actually confronts the League is that, resort to force being undeniably necessary (the European Powers have continually applied it) in China, has Japan exercised it in excess of the reasonable requirements of her legitimate position? A vote of the Assembly, guided by the findings of the Lytton Report, would no doubt answer this question in the affirmative, but, guided by concern for the future of the League, it will probably prefer to evade it. Whatever further experiments it may hereafter think fit to adopt in order to vindicate the ideals of internationalism and to placate the dignity of the lesser nations, they will assuredly be based on recognition of the truth, which the course of events in Manchuria has demonstrated, that the efficacy of any international law or pact must depend, in the last resort, upon the existence of force in reserve to uphold it. In other words, with nations as with individuals, the maintenance of law and order postulates a policeman.

If the existing international situation were not fraught with so many and grave dangers of conflict, one might derive matter for innocent merriment from the remarkable rapidity and unanimity with which the exponents of international pacifism have now come to the conclusion that the Covenant of the League, and all the other pacts signed by the Powers since 1919, possess in reality no peace-preserving virtue. When one recalls to mind the world-wide chorus of praise and thanksgiving which welcomed in turn the Locarno Agreements and the Kellogg Pact as heaven-sent instruments for the final abolition of war, all the pontifical blessings solemnly bestowed upon them by statesmen, prelates and dignitaries all the world over, there is food for the grim humour of a Carlyle in the sudden discovery and general confession that the towers and domes of the world's Palace of Peace have been erected upon shifting sands of delusion. Seeing

that those who have continually proclaimed the efficacy of these pacts with the deepest fervour of conviction have now been led to discover their futility, by a process of conversion as swift as that which overtook Saul on the road to Damascus, the student of modern politics may well question the wisdom with which human affairs are governed. And when he comes to examine into the causes of things, he will perceive that the peace machinery of all these international pacts suffers from the same fundamental weakness as that which stultified the Treaty makers at Versailles after the war, namely, the uncertainty and lack of continuity of America's foreign policy.

From the situation created at Geneva by the course of events in Manchuria, the interesting fact emerges that pacifism, as proclaimed by the Intellectuals of advanced Liberalism in this country, no longer presents a united front, being now divided into two curiously different schools of thought. The first, consisting of *sang-pur* internationalists of the H. G. Wells type, believes in the possibility of abolishing war by the creation of a modern World-State, in which all frontiers, all conflicting creeds, all differences of language and of national ideals, are to be eliminated. The second, acutely conscious of the imminent perils of conflict which threaten civilization in general and Europe in particular, and sceptical as to the prospects of the World-State, propose to prevent war by substituting for the ineffective machinery of the League a limited association between the British Empire and the United States for the policing of the world. Neither of these schools of thought has so far defined, with any precision, the type and working methods of the machinery by means of which their respective ends are to be achieved; all their manifestos are pervaded by a spacious vagueness very similar to that which characterized Mr. President Wilson's original conception of the nature and functions of the League. But, of the two, the idea of a world policed for its own good by the English-speaking peoples would seem to be more practical and

less remote than that of converting it, by processes of education, to the condition of a pacific Utopia, inhabited wholly by "international patriots."

The "Liberal idealism" which is responsible for the latter idea has lately been expounded, in a typical broadcast talk, by its major prophet, Mr. H. G. Wells. Looking out upon the world of to-day, menaced with increasing dangers of wars more devastating than the last, he finds himself "confronted with two facts, one bad and one good; the first, which has only been hinted at, that acts of war have become hideously immediate and far-reaching; and the second, that the whole round world can be brought together into one brotherhood, into one communion, one close-knit, freely-communicating citizenship, far more easily to-day than was possible with even such a little country as England a century ago." From this argument, Mr. Wells draws the conclusion that either we must go henceforth in constant fear and danger of death, "enemy neighbours with the rest of our species," or we must seek peace throughout the world, make one World-State, one world pax, with one money, one police, one speech and one brotherhood, however hard that task may seem." Sir Evelyn Wrench, another notable internationalist on the list of B.B.C. speakers, hopefully discerns in every country "a steadily-growing group of people that believes in world co-operation as the ultimate goal."

The essential weakness of this type of pacifism is that its advocates continually envisage the problems of war and peace as if they affected all parts of the world in one and the same way, as if its panaceas were equally and invariably applicable to every nation and kindred upon earth. In point of fact, the "hideous menace" of another world-war, which so greatly perturbs Mr. Wells, and with such good cause, casts no deep or abiding shadow upon the daily lives of the inhabitants of other continents. European civilization, with which our Intellectuals are *au fond* concerned, is undoubtedly

exposed to increasing perils at its readily accessible and vulnerable centres; but, for the present at all events, America runs no such risks, and wars may be (and are) fought in Asia which leave no permanent scars upon the peoples concerned.

The second school of pacifism, which is represented by the Intellectuals who have recently founded the *New Commonwealth* as the organ of British internationalism, is evidently not prepared to wait until the evolution of the World-State shall have averted the dangers which confront civilization; nor is it disposed to identify itself with the Albert Hall, or die-hard, type of pacifism, which, in the words of Mr. Beverly Nichols, demands peace at any price "at the cost of honour, at the cost of security, and at the cost of national independence." To its leaders, out of Manchuria there has come new light. They have now discovered and proclaim the fact that, in default of the power to enforce the collective will of international society, the pronouncements of the League of Nations amount to little more than pious opinions; or, as Hobbes put it 300 years ago, that "Covenants without the sword are but words." With a dramatically sudden *volte face*, they have therefore devised a new "peace-machinery," which, if carried to its logical conclusions, must relegate the League to the position of an expensive anachronism. They now propose that the collective will of international society (as they interpret it) should be imposed upon dissenters from that will, by means of an authoritative force, to be charged with the duty of maintaining international law and due respect for Treaties.

This abandonment of the belief, hitherto proclaimed as the only true faith, in the efficacy of the collective system of Treaties as a preventative of war, has been accompanied by some remarkable pronouncements in regard to the nature and duties of the international force which is to police the world. Some exponents of the "New Liberalism," like Lord Davies, are in favour of

reverting to the idea expressed by Lord Grey when the League was founded, and which the French Government now advocates, and would endow the League with "an organization which will enable it to function effectively and ensure the enforcement by common action of international obligations." But the school of pacifist thought which expresses itself in the *New Commonwealth* is evidently doubtful of the infallibility of the Council of the League in determining between national rights and wrongs, and more than doubtful of the advisability of entrusting the execution of its decisions to an international armed force with a cosmopolitan *personnel*, since experience has shown that such forces are fertile sources of strife. The idea of a cosmopolitan police force attempting to impose peace and sweet reasonableness in Asia, South America, or even in Central Europe, is one which can have few attractions for serious students of politics. Influenced by these and similar considerations, the founders of the *New Commonwealth* have reverted to the idea which found favour with many of President Wilson's supporters when he first propounded the idea of the League as an integral part of the Versailles Peace Settlement. Senator Williams, of the Committee on Foreign Relations, then defined this idea, and the prospective League, as a "limited association between the United States and the British Empire for the policing of the world."

Professor Zimmern, Sir Norman Angell, and their associates of the *New Commonwealth*, have now come to the conclusion that in the application of this idea lies the only hope of putting an end to the economic chaos and political unrest which afflict modern civilization. Applying it in the first instance to the Manchurian problem, Professor Zimmern observes that, if Japan should refuse to accept the ruling of the League, the "association of the British Commonwealth and the United States in the Pacific, implicit in the Washington Treaties which replaced the Anglo-Japanese Alliance,

would become plainly apparent." Sir Edward Grigg regards the French proposal to create an international force under the orders of the League as a "long-range ideal," which must take a long time to mature. "There must," he says, "be some effective interim sanction, and the League must have some security independent of its own machinery, something surer than Art. 16, something indeed like the original guarantee pact on which it was founded at the Paris Conference." He suggests that the only effective form which this guarantee can take is "the economic blockade of law-breakers, undertaken on their own initiative by the only two Powers which can enforce it with unquestionable effect—England and the United States." In other words, the moral authority of the League is to be supported by the British Fleet and by all the resources of the Empire, preferably, of course, with the active co-operation of the United States but, in any case, with their moral support.

In these and other similar proposals arising out of the Manchurian *impasse*, the pacifists' dilemma stands clearly revealed; for the proposal that the English-speaking peoples should undertake to police the world amounts, in fact, to a return to the old policy of national armaments and military alliances. Moreover, those who advocate this course are committed to two very questionable assumptions; firstly, that the world at large will consent, or can be compelled, to recognize any such arrangement; and, secondly, that the United States Government is in a position, and ready, to co-operate with the British Commonwealth in economic blockades involving not only the necessity of intervention in European affairs, but the abrogation of the Munroe doctrine and other momentous departures from America's traditional principles of foreign policy.

Human nature being what it is, and the world being still inhabited to a very considerable extent with "lesser breeds without the law," humanity's best hope of

securing relatively permanent peace would undoubtedly appear to lie in some peace-controlling machinery controlled by the predominant type of civilization, by a group of Powers who conscientiously hold some working system of morality which, by its own inherent justice, is capable of settling matters on a stable basis. This, after all, was the underlying idea of the Peace Settlement at Versailles. But until America's foreign policy shall have achieved a more reliable measure of continuity and precision, the idea of an Anglo-American alliance for policing the world is one which is not likely to commend itself to the majority of European statesmen, or to inspire them with more confidence than the French idea of an international armed force under the League.

Look at it as you will, a very horned dilemma.

The Passing of Flirt

By John C. Moore

NO one liked old Rawlings. He was unpleasantly fat, intolerant, controversial, exceedingly selfish, a bigot, and a crank withal. He had a notable partiality for the wine when it was red and—particularly—the gin when it was warming to the cockles, and years of hard drinking had made him irritable and capricious. Moreover, there were some rumours, not without foundation, of which the less said the better, that caused many to regard him with positive disgust.

He was also intolerably litigious. He must have spent each year nearly half of his comfortable income on legal processes. He seemed always to be bringing or defending actions for libel and slander, actions for trespass, claims for civil damages, claims against insurance, actions for infringement of copyright (he wrote books on Grecian ethics), and so on. It was a sort of hobby; but it was an extremely dangerous one for his friends, who never knew when they would be called upon to refute some astonishing accusation in the Courts.

That he was brilliantly clever no one could deny. His dry wit would convulse the veriest Job with laughter, and his satire scorched and burned like a red-hot brand. This alone made him many enemies, and even his well-meant hospitality—he would press you to come to breakfast, luncheon, tea, and dinner, and then to stop the night on top of it all—was so dreaded that in the clubs or at golf, people who knew him fled at his approach.

Finally, he was dreaded because of his possession of the two most disobedient, pampered, fawning little dogs in Christendom—on whom he lavished all that sentimental affection which he scorned to give to humanity. Rawlings' dogs were a greater nuisance than Rawlings himself. They were Cairn terriers, very fat, very spoilt, and very smelly. Wherever Rawlings went, they must accompany him. Thus if one asked Rawlings to tea, one had to face the certainty of having to entertain also

his objectionable dogs, who both had a sort of *flair* for being sick on the best carpet. Being utterly undisciplined, they were always fighting, and when out for walks they would frequently set upon others of their kind. The unfortunate owner of the innocent dog which had been attacked would then be called upon to defend an application for an injunction to keep his dangerous animal under proper control. Rawlings never lost any Heaven-sent opportunity of going to law.

* * * * *

It happened one hot day in August that I was passing through the seaport town of St. Thomas-on-the-Sands on my way to visit relations in Plymouth. My small car, never very tractable, broke down suddenly and extremely thoroughly in the busiest part of the steep High Street. I got out and diagnosed a seize and general disastrous overheating due to the fan belt having broken. I was searching for further damage (my small car has a passion for completeness when it breaks down) when I heard a well-known voice and saw a portly figure approaching at a heavy trot down the middle of the road.

"Damn the dogs, damn the dogs, blast the dogs, confound the dogs!"

There was no mistaking the figure or the voice. It was Rawlings. How he came to be at St. Thomas or what he was doing there were matters of small importance. Terror-stricken, I stood transfixed.

My head was half-hidden under the open bonnet of my car, and perhaps Rawlings would have passed me by unnoticed had not some imp of mischief prompted those infernal dogs to recognize me. They came galloping towards me, they yelped and barked, they fawned around my legs with a display of affection which was quite clearly all humbug. I looked away and prayed.

The gods were not upon my side. Rawlings saw me, exclaimed, shook hands, said "My dear young fellow" three times, shook hands again, went off to collect his

dogs (who had run away as soon as they had accomplished the mischief), came back, shook hands once more, and forced from me an admission of my plight and of the time the repairs would take. Thence forward he took complete charge of me. The car was garaged at an hotel and a red-headed mechanic let loose upon its inside. I was carried off to the cottage which Rawlings had taken for the summer holidays, and was garaged in the bathroom for a wash while the dogs were let loose upon my dispatch-case.

That was what Rawlings called "organization." He was a great fellow for "arranging things at short notice" and would probably have succeeded in putting-up a whole battalion of soldiers in that bungalow if he had had twenty minutes to make the necessary arrangements.

Luncheon was a torture. Rawlings was very friendly, for so far I had escaped being involved in any of the writs which he scattered broadcast among his acquaintances. I knew nothing of Greek literature, and I possessed no dog to be set upon, so I was comparatively immune. But Rawlings discoursed upon the worship of Priapus, about whom it appeared he was writing a book. Priapus —with one's luncheon—can be an extremely unpleasant person.

"A fascinating deity," declared Rawlings. "God of fertile gardens, green foliage, and bursting buds. God of love, too, in a way."

I then submitted to hearing about Priapus, in all his aspects, for half an hour. Interesting, no doubt, to the anthropologist and the folk-lorist and the psychologist, but with one's luncheon—well, not my choice . . .

When we had finished, my host tossed me a yellow-covered *de Maupassant*, and laid himself upon the sofa for his afternoon nap. I took the armchair and settled down to read; but man proposes and dog disposes in households such as Rawlings'.

First one, then the other, of those two most aggravating dogs came and asked to be allowed to jump on

to my lap. At first they begged with their eyes, gently pleading; but I hated them, and they smelt, so I would have none of it. Then they started to whimper miserably, and old Rawlings woke up, very cross at being disturbed.

"What are you doing to my dogs?" he asked. "I won't have 'em teased, I tell you! Come here, Flirt! Come here, Flapper!"

They wagged their tails at the governor and told him deliberate lies. I am sure of this, because Rawlings reproved me for kicking them, then went to sleep again.

Flapper and Flirt returned to me and jumped on to my lap—this time without even asking. I dared not shake them off, lest they should waken my host to tell him some fresh fabrication. They were Scots, and ca' canny wasn't in it.

I lit a cigarette; I regret to say I puffed some smoke at them. They took the hint and ran into the corner to devise a new torture for me.

Before long, Flapper emerged from the corner in great excitement, saying, with much tail-wagging, that there was a mouse under the coal-scuttle. This was quite untrue, but Flirt played up to her, scratching vigorously and cocking her ears.

Together they demanded that I should move the coal-scuttle. In fact, they presented me with an ultimatum: if I did *not* move it, they would whimper. They would waken the governor. They would get me into hot water. Ca' canny again.

From the time I rose to move it, they ceased to take any further interest in the alleged mouse. I proved it to be a fallacy, sat down heavily in my chair, and resumed reading.

It was now Flirt's turn to tease me. Not lacking in originality, she chose a heavy oak chest for the scene of her operations, making it clear that she wished me to move that also.

This was the last straw. I seized Flirt, and, opening the door, I gently pushed her out. Then I returned to

my chair and settled down peacefully to *de Maupassant*. Flapper, obviously intimidated by this show of authority, curled herself up in a corner and went to sleep. I heard faint scratchings at the door for a minute or two, whimpered remonstrances, then silence. After that, I think I dozed. . . .

* * * * *

It was tea-time when I awoke, and the clock stood at five to four. I heard old Rawlings lumbering upstairs to wash. He shouted to me over the banisters:

"I suppose you haven't seen Flirt anywhere? The little rascal's vanished off the face of the earth . . ."

I hesitated. Then, to my eternal shame, it came into my mind to lie. Perhaps it was fear of Rawlings, perhaps it was some queer presentiment; anyhow, I lied.

"She was here a minute ago. Perhaps she ran upstairs," I said.

"Yes . . . I suppose she's up in one of the bedrooms. The little blighter! Flirt! Flirt! Come here!"

I stole out through the door and into the garden. There was no Flirt there. I looked over the garden-gate, up and down the road; there was a little white Sealyham hunting on his own, in the far distance a brownish sort of mongrel. But of Flirt never a sign.

As I entered the house I heard Rawlings' deep voice calling: "Flirt—Flirt—Flirt! Damn the dog!"

Rawlings came downstairs, still calling. A teapot steamed on the table, and a plate of crumpets congealed into lumps of grease; but tea was out of the question. In that moment realization of what I had done came to me, and I began to be afraid.

Old Rawlings stood at the window, looking out on to an expanse of rough, undulating waste-ground that stretched down to the shore. Greyish hardy grasses, blown into little tufts by the wind, grew out of brown sandy earth. Opposite us a little bank was riddled through and through with rabbit-holes. Rawlings spoke despondently:

"She must have run out of the back when the baker came. The little devil! But she's sure to come back . . . *sure* to come back . . ."—but there was no conviction in the tone.

"That rabbit-warren. I've always been frightened of it. The dogs go scratching at the holes and the sand falls in on top of them. They can't resist the temptation of a rabbit-hunt. I came here to be away from the motors, but it seems to me I've jumped out of the frying-pan into the fire."

Silently, I followed my host out through the back door.

"We must try all the holes, all the holes," he said, and emerged from an outhouse with a hoe and a spade.

"You see," he said, as we walked over the stubby grass towards the rabbit-warren, "we'll poke the handle of the hoe down each hole, and call. They don't do down very deep. We might hear her scratching if she's down one of them."

It seemed to me a ridiculous proceeding, but a glance at Rawlings' grey face told me that he was in earnest. He was hatless, and the sun—still uncomfortably hot—shone down upon his bald head.

As we approached the warren a dozen white tails bobbed up and disappeared. I shuddered as I realized how easy it would have been for Flirt, seduced by those bobbing tails, to leave the garden and worm her way down one of the holes; how her scratching would loosen the dry, friable sand, till the roof of the burrow fell in . . . If *that* happened, we would never see her again.

I looked at Rawlings and guessed that he, too, had noticed the white scuts like shooting stars, dodging into the warren. He commenced vigorously laying about him among the thistles with a hoe, and began looking for rabbit-holes.

All through the hot afternoon we worked. Rawlings' passion for "organization" came in again. At first he said:

"Now we'll make a cross in the sand outside

each hole; that will save going over the same ground twice."

Then, after ten minutes, he thought of an improvement on this:

"Cut off a thistle-head," he grunted, "and put it outside the holes you've tried."

"Like the blood on the doors to mark the first-born of Israel," I remarked brightly, "or the cross on the houses where the poor devils had plague . . ."

Rawlings snorted angrily, and I felt that my little pleasantry had fallen flat.

I can still recall a very vivid picture of that afternoon. Old Rawlings, hatless and bald, wandering from hole to hole, calling, calling, all the time:

"Flirt! Flirt! Flirt! Damn the dog!"

The thistles that stood waist-high in the warren, and the host of little scarlet-speckled burnet moths that fluttered about them; the rough sandy ground stretching down towards the beach; the blue unruffled sea beyond. I remember it all so clearly, and Oh, my God! my own feelings that afternoon!

Rawlings was changed in my eyes from something fat, somnolent, disgusting, to a human being. It was an amazing transformation, a piece of spiritual alchemy. You cannot understand the revelation of that moment. Here he was, this wine-bibber, gourmand, *bon-vivant*, this lover of comfort, courting sunstroke and heart-attack, working as he had never worked in all his life, all for the sake of a very small and very disobedient dog. Here was the man of learning, the master of satire, the classicist, the logician, sweating his very heart out for a whim of misplaced affection.

As I watched him I realized with something of a shock that had it been necessary Rawlings would have willingly given his life to save one of those beastly little dogs. It was an astonishing thought.

At last I think he convinced himself that Flirt was not in the warren, but it was six o'clock when we gave up the

search, and even then there was no thought of tea. A gin-and-bitters for both of us, and a saucer of milk for Flapper—be sure she was not forgotten!—and then we started off up the road on the chance that Flirt had strayed.

Then came the end, and my eternal shame.

A butcher-boy met us, carrying in a basket a shapeless bundle of broken bones that had been Flirt before she met the swift death of the flying wheels. A thought flew to my brain: "Juggernaut!"

And then Rawlings turned on his heel with never a word, and we returned to the cottage.

Mercifully, the red-headed boy had worked wonders on my little car, and I started almost immediately. I do not think my heart was ever so heavy, or the August countryside seemed ever so sad, though a riot of colour clamoured on either side of me as I sped along the Plymouth road, leaving Rawlings to his sorrow. At least (I comforted myself) he had Flapper.

And since that day I have heard no word of him; I do not even know if he is still alive. Often, still, folk speak unkindly of him; but for me there is no bitterness in the memory. I see him standing on the stairs, peering over the banisters, and calling to me:

"Tea's ready, dear old boy—all the organization done, you see, even in a cottage. And—Oh, by Jove—where's Flirt, the little bounder—where's she got to?"

Britain and America

By "Ignotus"

BY June 15th, 1933, Britain will have made a settlement with the United States in the matter of war-debts—or will, definitely, have failed to do so. In either case, the consequences will be immense and not at present calculable. The debts owing by the Continental Powers, with all that pertains of future political alignment, will be decided uniquely by the result of the negotiations between Britain and America. The issue rests with those two high contracting parties. It is of prime importance, therefore, that the two peoples should clearly understand each other's point of view.

The American people should be sufficiently instructed as to the British point of view. The British Government in its long and doubtless eloquent manifesto—of which "Punch" said that it had read "the first and last yards"—cabled it to them regardless of expense, and subsequently Mr. Neville Chamberlain, and other political pundits, have magisterially lectured the American public on international economics while ostensibly addressing the electors of Little Puddleton. But the mere fact that the British Government, and its component politicians, should thus pontifically have addressed the American people is proof positive that they know nothing whatever about the real America. They could not have done anything more calculated utterly to wreck their cause.

Characteristically, those official and semi-official utterances assumed the reality of the "blood-is-thicker-than-water"-"hands-across-the-sea" illusion cherished by a majority of Englishmen. British orators, sincere in a desire to hasten the millennium, who appeal to that sentiment appeal at most to an infinitesimal minority scattered chiefly in the Eastern States. British publicists who tour the United States and are hospitably entertained by charming, cultured, and above-all, courteous Americans—but who never come in contact with the

real America of the millions—in perfect good faith foster the myth. The benevolent activities of the English-Speaking Union propagate it, almost exclusively in England, in an atmosphere of post-prandial cordiality. It is a myth, nevertheless. And Britain will never be able to deal effectively and honestly with America until the British people visualise the American people as they really are, and understand why they must be so.

Perhaps regrettably, the psychological dominant of the American people is not a convenient goodwill towards us, but a latent and inherent hostility—more readily to be evoked than against any other nation with the exception of Japan. This is not fortuitous. It is a necessary law of their being. As a political entity, the United States derives uniquely from its successful revolt against England. American national history, to which patriotic sentiment must make appeal, begins with that event. Finding compensation elsewhere in the new and vastly greater Empire of the nineteenth century, the British long since ceased to think of the matter. Not so the American people. They cannot, and must not, forget it. Whereas in Britain it would be impossible to arouse any interest whatever in a tendencious school-book account of the War of Independence, in America there has recently been a fierce controversy over the introduction of school-histories which ventured a nearer approximation to historical truth. It is vitally important, indeed, that into each successive generation of Americans should be instilled a continuance of that intense national self-consciousness with which the American people commenced their independent existence. The War of the Revolution is vividly familiar to every American child as a comparatively recent and all-important event. By contrast, the immensely vaster and equally epoch-making Civil War of the sixties is year by year fading into almost complete oblivion. The struggle of North and South has no enduring importance to the *Geist* of the American people. The struggle against Britain was their *raison*

d'être, and still, for many reasons, Britain looms as the largest external fact in their collective consciousness.

The original insurgent British stock is now in a marked and increasing minority, but the successive waves of alien immigration which have been more or less Americanized were especially susceptible to this specific thought-mould of the American nation. Irish and Germans, and the hordes of hotch-potch nationalities from other parts of Europe, could readily and indeed enthusiastically accept hostility to England as the first characteristic of the genuine American. It gave them that *something against which to react* which is the first essential in the development of a national spirit. Moreover, we on our side have been guilty of sins at least of omission. Until the present century, we have not seriously bothered very much about America. It was a somewhat crude country a long way off, where people got rich quickly. But the Americans are very conscious of themselves—and very conscious of us. They interpreted our perfectly authentic indifference as a supercilious affectation of superiority. It would be a miracle if they did not resent it. They did, and do. It is in these sentiments that 140 million Americans have been and are educated—of necessity, as I have pointed out—and it is futile to expect of them the cordial "glad hand" of the English-Speaking Union. It is yet more futile to expect them to make spectacularly self-sacrificing renunciations in our favour.

As a political entity, therefore, the *Geist* of the American people is and must be inherently antagonistic to England. There is another deep-rooted tradition, equally antagonistic. As a commercial entity, from the first the American Republic has found itself thwarted and injured by the naval supremacy of Britain. When Britain is at war, automatically her sea-power endeavours to blockade her enemy; historically, that is her recipe for victory. The natural interests of the United States have always been to sell freely to anybody and everybody,

irrespective of whether there was a war on or not. Whatever other and idealistic motives prompted the American entry into the war, it is nevertheless a fact that in 1917 the Allies were visibly menaced with defeat, and that the United States was menaced with the biggest bad debt in history. To prevent the recurrence of such a state of things, President Wilson inserted the "Freedom of the Seas" in his Fourteen Points. That meant that never again should America be compelled to sell to one set of belligerents only. It meant also, incidentally, that never again could Great Britain win a war except with the permission or alliance of the United States. All the subsequent Disarmament Conferences have had no other purpose; the squabbles over land armaments are merely ancillary and largely a camouflage.

That is the American psychological background with which Britain has to do. From the American point of view, it is in every respect entirely legitimate. While we have our own legitimate point of view, conditioned by out own vital necessities, let us frankly recognize theirs and not expect from them an altruistic generosity which is counter to every instinct and tradition of their national being.

When this psychological background is considered, the question of the war-debts—and specifically the British debt—assumes an aspect that transcends mere economics. After the war, America would have written-off with a shrug of the shoulders the debts owed by the Continental Powers. She did in fact write them down as low as was consistent with the principle of maintaining the essential sacredness of such obligations. For the colossal war-debt of Britain, and the sixty-odd years tribute payable by Britain, was the outward and visible sign of the transference of world-supremacy from Great Britain to the United States.

The British Government which asks of any American Government, Republican or Democratic, the cancellation

of these debts is asking an impossibility. No American Government could accede to such a request and live. The American people is in the trough of a catastrophic depression without parallel. Whatever the form in which those debts were incurred—actually, we re-lent them to our Allies for the purchase of American goods and services, at war-inflated values—it must be remembered that they have long since been *capitalized*, in the form of Liberty Bonds, subscribed for with the genuine dollars of the American public, on which the American Government pays guaranteed interest. The dollar payments by Great Britain, as do the lesser payments of the other European debtors, go directly into the ledger account of the American Government out of which it pays that Liberty Bond interest. Voluntarily to forgo those receipts at a time when the United States Treasury is faced with an immense deficit is asking too much of any people surrounded with evidences of domestic ruin as the American people are. If the interest on Liberty Bonds is to be paid, the United States Government must raise additional taxes precisely to the amount no longer forthcoming from Britain and the Continent. Moreover, such a cancellation would implicitly confess the abdication of American world-power.

The United States indeed is impotently being forced to view the collapse of the magnificent structure of the past fifteen years. To appreciate the magnitude of the disaster, one must get it into historical perspective. From the end of the Civil War until 1914, the United States grew rapidly to gianthood in a phenomenal expansion of population and wealth. But, save for the by-product acquisitions of the Spanish War, it was an internal process only. Beyond the American frontiers, Great Britain bestrode the world like a colossus. However patriotically and justifiably Americans might vaunt their own progress, outside their limits there was a greater than themselves. The British Navy dominated every sea. The British mercantile marine

carried almost as much merchandise as the rest of the world's ships put together. British trade was the big boy in every market. British finance reigned from China to Peru, and there was no nation which did not pay London tribute. The United States was itself a debtor to Britain; so much so that in the first days of the war the American dollar slumped to a discount of $\$5\frac{1}{2}$ to the £ in consequence of the calling in of short-term loans. It was a spectacle difficult to reconcile with the average American's sincere conviction that his own country was immeasurably superior not only in idealistic morality but in efficiency and drive. To him, the British Empire was an anachronistic abnormality that was almost an affront.

The war changed everything in the twinkling of an eye. Here at last was the opportunity. It was voiced by Ambassador Page—who, as England still gratefully recognises, was the antithesis of the typically anti-British twister of the lion's tail—in his famous correspondence with President Wilson. In October, 1913, he had written: "The future of the world belongs to us . . . Now what are we going to do with the leadership of the world presently when it clearly falls into our hands? And how can we use the English for the highest purposes of democracy?" In 1914 he wrote: ". . . Whenever we choose to assume the leadership of the world, they (the British) 'll grant it—gradually—and follow loyally." In another letter: "The trade of the world, or as much of it as is profitable, we may take as we will . . . What are we going to do with this England and this Empire, presently, when economic forces put the leadership of the race in our hands? How can we lead it and use it for the highest purposes of the world and of democracy?" In yet another letter: "We can command these people, this Government, this tight island, and its world-wide Empire; they honour us, they envy us, they see the time near at hand when we shall command the capital and the commerce of the world." Walter Hines Page was no ranter but, in every sense, a *good* American and one,

moreover, who set himself resolutely against hostility to England.

After the war, it seemed that the dream had come true. Germany, a menacing trade-rival of the United States, lay crushed and shattered. America was no longer a debtor nation; all the world owed her fantastically gigantic sums. The war had brought her colossal cash profits, and in addition had enormously expanded and modernized her machine equipment. The other belligerents were exhausted; America had scarcely begun to put forth her strength. The moment anticipated by Mr. Page had arrived. President Wilson went to Europe, more powerful than any man in history. The peoples of England and France deliriously acclaimed the idealist who would autocratically inaugurate the millennium, and their statesmen smiled wryly.

Mr. Wilson did not do quite all he proposed—Britain refused politely to commit international suicide by accepting the "Freedom of the Seas," and France managed to engineer a fairly good stranglehold on contemporary Germany—but in the main the will of this new and supremely powerful America prevailed. It prevailed because in cold fact America was formidably preponderant. A new era had begun.

It had noticeably begun for Great Britain. The outside world had the sardonic pleasure of watching England taking orders from her erstwhile offspring, and —with whatever suavely dissimulated wrigglings—in the main obeying them. To placate the politically powerful Irish element in the United States, Great Britain desisted from the suppression of the local little rebellion in Southern Ireland (a mere village brawl compared with the rebellion of the Southern States in the sixties), and docilely set up the Irish Free State. Ambassador Harvey, indeed, publicly expressed his nation's satisfaction: "Whatever events will happen in Ireland, so far as the United States is concerned, England has done the right thing, and there will no longer be any Irish question

in America." Not to offend America, Britain terminated the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. Tackling the "Freedom of the Seas" from another angle, the United States offered Britain the alternative of being enormously outbuilt by a new American navy or of accepting "parity" in battleships at the Washington Conference. Britain accepted the parity—battleships being an expensive and doubtfully useful luxury anyway, and shuffled the vitally important cruisers out of the argument. The United States subsequently perceived its mistake, and all the subsequent abortive Disarmament Conferences have been attempts to retrieve it. With that exception, the subservience of British policy to that of the United States was almost absolute in the first post-war years.

But not until the transient slump of 1921 had been overcome did the United States get into the stride of its new *Weltmacht*. The basic factor of that *Weltmacht* was the British return to the gold standard on the pre-war ratio, decided upon about the same time as and in correlation with the Debt Settlement of 1923. Whatever the fallacious hopes of the British bankers struggling to maintain London as the money-market of the world, that return operated automatically and inexorably to the advantage of the United States.

In the first place, it revalorized gold whereof the United States had now an enormous hoard while the rest of the world had divorced its currencies from that commodity. If nobody else wanted the metal, in due course the American hoard must have become worthless, and America would have found her war-profits mere "fairy-gold" devoid of external purchasing power. England's return to the standard meant that New York and London together could put effective pressure on France, Italy and Germany, with the rest of the world following suit, to re-establish gold as the international unit of value and to regulate their national availabilities of cash and credit in ratio to their possession of the metal, automatically once more indispensable to them.

Furthermore, America's overwhelmingly creditor position meant that all free supplies of gold must automatically flow thither, even if they flowed back in terms of loans, and that London, as the mere channel for that flow, must inevitably become subordinate to New York.

This again had its reaction on British policy. It was, to say the least, inadvisable for Britain to ignore American wishes if at any time America could withdraw large amounts of gold from London and provoke a serious financial disturbance. The British return to the pre-war ratio accentuated this dependence. Being uneconomically too high, it meant that British industry was *pro tanto* penalized in competition with American mass-production, and could not provoke a sufficient return-flow of gold or credit in exchange for its exports to restore London to its pre-war autonomy. British finance, and therefore British policy, found itself in a bondage of golden chains. So long as Britain, with her globe-wide satellites, was in this position, the world-power of the United States was automatic.

The years from 1923 to 1929 saw that world-power in operation. While the industry and commerce of Britain languished and declined, the United States enjoyed such a prosperity as the world has never seen. The products of the vast American machine-power swamped every market, while from other countries she bought virtually only raw materials to be converted into manufactures. There would not have been enough gold in the world to furnish the one-way flow in payment of her exports, further swollen by the one-way flow of debt instalments which represented no current commodites whatever. But Americans had perforce to find investments for this new wealth, more than could be absorbed in the United States itself. Accordingly—and, again automatically—they sent it out again in overseas loans. No nation has ever lent such vast sums in so short a period, nor lent them so recklessly. They lent milliards to Germany, partly to flow back again in reparations and debt-pay-

ments, partly to be spent in huge new industrial equipment that must eventually compete with the American, partly to be squandered in statue-studded parks, stadiums and public buildings. They forced vast loans on every South American republic, far beyond any local capacity of profitable utilization. They poured money into Canada, so that British investments in that Dominion became minimal in proportion and Canada became an economic vassal of the United States. They lent money here, there, and everywhere to every borrower who could be persuaded to accept it. And with every new foreign loan, with every new foreign investment, it seemed that the American control of foreign destinies was being yet more unshakably consolidated.

And now? The United States lies devastated under the economic hurricane whose ultimate cause was the American absorption of the metal on which her overseas customers had by her been compelled or induced to base their purchasing power. The gigantic amounts lent to Germany and South America are lost beyond hope of recovery. What is worse, she has lost her control of world-affairs, financial and political. She lost it automatically when Great Britain, with an agonized reluctance which future generations will find comic, was forced off the gold standard. From the moment when London's credit and London's gold reserves were no longer at the mercy of New York, Great Britain recovered her political independence.

The Ottawa Conference was the first result. A new economic bloc was in fact inevitable and in germ immediately Great Britain ignored the gold-fetish which more than anything else had precipitated the world economic disaster, although excessive machine-means of production was a contributory. The British Commonwealth of Nations all, save to a certain extent Canada, looked to London as their financial centre. They form the greatest group of purchasers on the globe. As a purchasing unit, they dominate the world's markets glutted with commo-

dities, and automatically the smaller countries which must sell to them or perish have been compelled to correlate their currencies with sterling. Sterling, and not the dollar, has become the master-currency of the world. As a consequence, world-prices of commodities have continued to fall ruinously in terms of gold, while remaining comparatively stable in terms of sterling.

Hence the American demand for the stabilization of sterling in terms of gold as the price of the remission of debt. From the American point of view, the debt is a negotiable asset, and if they are to consent to a diminution of their asset they are entitled to get something in exchange. Immeasurably the most important thing they can get in exchange is the return to the gold standard which will again make London dependent on New York, and therefore again subordinate British world-policy to that of Washington. With Britain again virtually acting as the agent of the United States, the American world-hegemony will be gradually restored. It is an entirely legitimate attitude from the American standpoint. If American statesmen did not adopt it, they would in fact be unworthy of their trust.

If British statesmen are as acutely aware of their duty to specifically British interests, there must be a deadlock in the debt negotiations. Even if Britain were to admit the full validity of the debt, and offer to pay in gold so long as the British reserves of gold lasted, it would still be unacceptable to the United States. The American bankers and statesmen know perfectly well that the payment of the debts in any effective form is a popular, but visionary, dream. For such payments to be of use they must be in the form of dollar-credits, to be used in the payment of Liberty Bond interest. There can be no dollar-credits available in London except such as derive from the sale of British industrial products in America. But America is already industrially equipped to supply far more than her own people. To admit such imports would be further to injure the already appallingly

crippled American industrial market. American industry must have a monopoly of the home market, and export to others if the colossal capitalization of industry is ever to be revalorized. Hence the demand for "trade-facilities" as a part of the debt-bargain. The vital consideration is the British return to gold which would restore American dominance of the outside world.

Suppose that deadlock occurs? Suppose Britain resolutely refuses to bargain debt remission against return to the gold standard and "trade-facilities" which are a euphemism for the abrogation of Ottawa? Suppose that Britain shrugs her shoulders and defaults? What then?

The money markets will doubtless have a temporary spasm of panic. On a longer view, such a situation might be for the benefit not only of Britain, but of the United States and the whole world. Britain would indeed retain her new-won political independence. Nevertheless, the gradual improvement in trade, already observable between the members of the sterling bloc, must inevitably in the long run revitalize American trade as well. And, to compete, America must inevitably *devalorize the gold-content of the dollar*, with the effect of unfreezing the nightmare mass of unpayable internal debts which is crushing the Middle-West, and thereafter the whole of the United States, into bankruptcy. Already, indeed, the imperative human instinct to survive is evading obligations expressed in that excessively high gold-content of the dollar (the United States has gold enough to make the nominal gold-content twice as high, but if it did so the gold standard would be demonstrated yet more disastrously as the noxious fiction that it is). All over the Western States, direct exchange by barter of labour against commodities is a startling and vast phenomenon, spreading like a prairie fire. Moreover, already a subsidiary money—ignoring the dollar entirely—is automatically coming into existence. In those Western States one can exchange *scrip*, giving right to

so many hours of labour or to a given volume of commodities, on scrip-markets which are as busy as Wall Street is stagnant. If this phenomenon continues, and there is no visible reason why it should not, a new and otherwise severe economic crisis is in process of accumulation in the United States. Carried to its logical end, it would mean that the citizens of the United States themselves abandoned their dollar, and that all obligations expressed in the national currency would effectively be null and void. A British return to gold, with an intensification of the evils resulting from that insufficient and anachronistic basis for credit, must hasten the day of the breakdown of the gold dollar in America itself.

On the other hand, a British refusal to return to gold means the end of those world-dreams which Ambassador Page so joyously expressed. Such an abandonment cannot be other than painful to American pride, which is just as legitimate as British pride. It is the business of statesmen, of whatever nationalities, to find formulas which will salve national prides, while leaving realities to continue their course unimpeded. For ultimately only the real is good. Fictions always have to be paid for, at compound interest in human suffering. The realities in this situation are that Great Britain and the United States are two great and independent nations. Any attempt by either to dominate and " lead " the other is doomed to failure. One has globe-wide interests scattered over the seven seas. The other is a close-knit Empire effectively dominating a single immense Continent. Let us amicably each go our own way, for the greater prosperity of our respective millions of citizens, who have this only in common, that they share a common basis of civilization, but who are less and less kindred, linked in a common tie of blood. It is futile to appeal to each other in terms of quite imaginary " good will." The solely valuable good will between us is the good will of mutual respect in divergent destinies.

John Galsworthy: The Novelist

By E. H. Lacon Watson

IT has been agreed by most of our critics—who are rarely agreed upon any point of importance—that John Galsworthy was in the Thackeray tradition, carrying on the torch that had dropped (perhaps a little smoky) from the hand of Anthony Trollope. And it is true enough, in more ways than one. Thackeray was one of the first novelists to perceive that it might be no detriment to fiction if the *dramatis personæ* were not divided by too sharp a line into sheep and goats—if, in fact, your adventuress might be permitted a few redeeming points, and even a Colonel Newcome might be led astray by that last infirmity of noble minds, the desire of leaving a fortune to an only son. In his hands the hero became less heroic, the villain less villainous: instead of characters that were either black or definitely white, we were introduced to men and women more delicately contrasted, and therefore more easily recognized as belonging to the human race.

The novelist, in fact, was ceasing to be a partisan. He no longer "took sides." He was not so much attempting to portray the defeat of vice, the triumph of virtue, as to give a real picture of life, with its innumerable little ironies, its moments of high passion and idealism jostled by tragedy, and meanness, and an all-saving humour. He became more aloof, more detached. Thackeray, indeed, adopted too openly the role of the showman manipulating his puppets, and his comments when he chose to come forward to the footlights himself (as he rather frequently did) were apt to destroy for the moment the imaginary world that he had so carefully built up. The reader could not but feel that, however admirable in themselves, these interruptions by the author were an impertinence.

Like Thackeray and his faithful follower Trollope, Galsworthy loved his characters too well to part from them easily. They had grown under his hands to be

real men and women; he knew every little turn and twist of their minds as well as every tiny peculiarity of their persons, and he could not bear to turn them out at the end of a book into a cold and unsympathetic world. I cannot recall any writer who seemed to see and know his characters so clearly. He was fond of describing them at length; read, for example, the gathering of the Forsyte family at the opening of "The Man of Property," the dinner party which is staged in the opening chapter of "The Country House." It is assuredly not his fault if we cannot visualize every one of those Forsytes, each individual Pendyce. An artist illustrating his works would have, one imagines, an easier job than usual. And, since he knew his characters so thoroughly that he could not mention them without adding some illuminating phrase, we naturally know best those whom he wrote of most often —the great Forsyte family. The Saga overshadows the rest of the Galsworthy novels by sheer length and abundance. But all his best novels introduce us to families, English families of the middle or upper class, who are well worth knowing. After reading them, we go away feeling we have made new friends, whom we shall not readily forget. Even in the slightly exalted circle of "The Patrician," where there is scarcely anyone without a title, we may feel ourselves admitted to a charming intimacy. For Galsworthy was extraordinarily sure-footed: he knew his ground and seldom cared to venture outside it. He had the good fortune of being able to choose his subjects without too anxious a regard for the wishes of publisher or public. He never had to write for money.

Yet he proceeded cautiously. I believe I reviewed one of his first books, written about the time of the South African War, when he was somewhere about thirty-one and was using the pen-name of "John Sinjohn." "The Man of Property" did not appear until March 1906; "In Chancery" not until October

1920. But the Forsytes had all been waiting, ready to come forth when required. There is a short story in "A Man of Devon," which is one of the "John Sinjohn" books, published in 1901, containing an episode in the early life of Swithin Forsyte, which comes back to him on his death-bed. I read it again the other day, and though the story itself is not one of Galsworthy's happiest efforts (I don't think he was ever at his best in that form), the Swithin there drawn is indubitably the Swithin of the Saga.

I confess that I regard the Saga as the most remarkable work of fiction of our time. It is a wonderful work—a social document of the highest importance as well as a vast panorama of the last sixty or seventy years. It is a moving picture of the period of Galsworthy's own lifetime, into which he poured lavishly all that he had seen and noted, guessed or divined. The mid-Victorian, Edwardian, and Georgian eras are all there, miraculously preserved for our inspection like some prehistoric mammoth that had sunk in a bed of yielding clay. We have the London of our fathers or grandfathers, from the days of the Prince Consort and crinolines and peg-top trousers, down through hansom cabs and bicycles and Lord Salisbury, to motors and aeroplanes and a Labour Government. And how admirably it is all presented! There is astonishingly little in it that I could wish altered. There is, of course, an attitude of mind that might annoy some. Like his own Felix Freeland, he early began to look upon the rebel and the under-dog with too indulgent an eye for his fellows. They could not quite understand it: the man must be something of a crank. Was he not an old Harrovian, winner of the school half-mile? For their part, they liked their bit of hunting or shooting without bothering too much (as this man seemed to do) about how it felt to the fox or the pheasant.

Galsworthy, in fact, was a humanitarian; and this cult was still unpopular when he wrote "Fraternity" and "The Freelands." There were many—I daresay

there are still many—who held opinions like those of stout old Lord Romfrey in "Beauchamp's Career." No unnecessary cruelty—but not too much of this revolutionary talk! If we once begin questioning the justice of imprisonment for arson, for example, where are we? The very foundations of society would rock. I confess that in those early days, when I was reviewing "Fraternity," I failed to predict for Galsworthy any great commercial success. I admired his work myself, but he seemed too quiet, too unemotional, to make a great stir outside the literary world. But sometimes, by a fortunate chance, the great British Public forsakes its usual gods: overtaken by a beneficent madness, it will now and again run wild after the strangest, the most unexpected, deities. The Forsyte Saga effected this miracle. In every one of us there is so much of the essential Forsyte that we could not fail to perceive the truth of the portrait. And the sympathy of the writer did the rest.

For Galsworthy was the most sympathetic of novelists. It is remarkable that, going over his books in my mind (and I think I know most of them pretty well) I can hardly think of a single character that leaves an unpleasant impression. There may be one or two, like Lady Malden in "The Country House," or Lady Malloring in "The Freelands," who perhaps display a trace of the censorious spirit, and are properly rebuked for it, but even these are gently handled. It is noteworthy that the immortal Soames Forsyte, who began by being the villain of "The Man of Property," ended by becoming almost the hero of "The Swan Song." Galsworthy had so keen a desire for justice that he hesitated to condemn anybody. He looked like a man who passed many sleepless nights weighing carefully the two sides that are inevitably to be found in every question. He found, in the end, something good to say for even the most unprepossessing. You may discover among his characters, now and then, some dry old stick like James

Pendyce, or his brother who had become "almost imperceptibly" a Major-General, but they are never allowed to pass out of his pages without some kindly touch that illuminates them. And how delightful he is with his old ladies, calm with the lavender fragrance of a past age: how charmingly he pictures his young girls, standing half timid and wholly eager on the threshold of life and love: how sympathetically he deals with the simple ruddy sportsman on the one hand, or the fiery crank on the other! He loved them all—and this is to my mind the real secret of his popularity, both at home and abroad, the secret of his Nobel Prize, and his Order of Merit, and of the lasting affection he inspired in the hearts, not only of those who knew him personally, but of those who had only read his books. There are those at the present time who write of mankind as though they hated and despised the human race. They may have their reward in applause. Of John Galsworthy we may write that he loved his fellow-men: he will live for long in many memories.

Our Eggs in One Basket

By W. J. Blyton

"FOR our state of civilization," wrote Mr. Charles Marriott the other day, "it is customary to blame the war, but it is questionable if the war did more than hurry up the perfectly logical fulfilment of Samuel Johnson's prediction: 'Depend upon it, this rage for trade (then beginning) will destroy itself. You and I will not see it; but the time will come when there will be an end to it.' The world went into Queer Street when it went into 'business' as distinct from 'work.'"

It is a true diagnosis. It is the one diagnosis for which politicians have no use, since they live on the empiric and tactical surface of events. It is a diagnosis, too, which it is difficult to publish in any but the most independent kind of journal or review.

That is a grave but scarcely a surprising fact, when you recall that Disraeli, at the height of sway, could not get his own battalions even to see it. He said: "It may be vain now in the midnight of your intoxication to tell you that there will be an awakening of bitterness. It may be idle now in the springtime of your economic frenzy to warn you that there may be an ebb of trouble. But the dark and inevitable hour will arrive. Then when your spirit is humbled by misfortune you will recur to those activities and principles which made and can alone keep England great." That was in May 1846. He was not heard then. Audibility is better to-day.

Others, too, were imploring Britain to recognize that the feverish industrialization of herself in order to snap orders and be the world's workshop could not possibly last, in the very nature of things. Fifty more years at the very outside was the term of this abnormal one-sided development, which was an improvident putting of all our eggs into one basket. It was, to vary the metaphor, to back the wrong horse, a horse whose running would be sensationally good over the first quarter of the course,

and then must flop as it was overtaken by others which equally had an intention of making a show industrially for themselves. It was a dream from which, by the laws of others' progress, we *must* be awakened by events, because—against the advice and prayers of the long-sighted—we were sabotaging our main and primary industry, agriculture and all its attendant crafts which are simply fundamental to the life of a nation.

"You," said Beaconsfield to the infatuated, "openly declare your opinion that if there were not an acre of land cultivated in England, it would not be the worse for this country. In open chorus you announce your object to be the monopoly of the commerce of the universe, to make this country the workshop of the world! Believe me, I speak not as your enemy when I say it will be an exception to the laws which have governed society if you maintain for long the success you aim at without the permanence and stability afforded by the territorial principle and agriculture. Though you may flourish for a moment after their destruction, though your ports may be filled with shipping, your factories smoke on every plain, and your forges flame in every city, I see no reason why you should form an exception to that which the page of history has mournfully recorded, that you should not fade like Tyrian dye, and moulder like the Venetian palaces."

Tours through our really devastated industrial areas vindicate every word of that. To-day what is needed is no mere cobbling "help for agriculture"—which is the limit of Whitehall's imagination—but a wide ordered recovery of rural employment and prosperity by millions who are now workless, wageless, and hungry and have for several generations been estranged from the original England—the hidden England on which everything else must be based. We, the legatees of a century of complete misunderstanding, are called upon to carry through deep *organic* changes in the whole national working life. Since all nations' exports, ours included, *necessarily* fall

and will continue to fall in proportion as saturation of markets arrives and as each nation supplies itself, it is obvious to all but the economically blind that on *those* lines—of " revival " of manufactures, for countries which don't want them and will not *admit* them in their own trade interests—there is no hope. The displaced millions, who will never again as workers see the inside of their mills, forges, mines, and workshops, must be put to work for which there *is* a demand, which will provide subsistence and a little over. *Some* exchange and export there will doubtless always be—but henceforth increasingly it will be marginal. The main volume of production and distribution will more and more be internal to every country (while international commerce will tend to be in ideas, luxuries and specialities).

The purely temporary and abnormal Victorian gold-rush *via* manufacture was definitely done for twenty or thirty years ago. The failure to recognize the end of that chapter when it occurred, and of course the failure to foresee that it could not but end, has found us unprepared as a nation, perplexed, angry and in many cases hungry. Yet it was inevitable when we began to cut our sinews and divorce ourselves from our sources of sustenance. And there was no lack of prophets, Conservatives, economists and patriots to plead with the wild men who caused the mal-development, and to tell them the run of luck was artificial, transient and unwholesome if they counted upon it and if they smashed meanwhile the true lines of defence in field and furrow, natural living and a spaced-out, self-respecting population.

Froude, imperialist and Tory, observer and traveller, said: " In a country like ours, where each child that is born finds every acre of land appropriated, a universal ' Not yours ' set upon the rich things with which things he is surrounded, and a government which, unlike those of old Greece and modern China, does not permit superfluous babies to be strangled—such a child, I say, since he is required to live, has a right to demand such teaching

as shall enable him to live with honesty and health. It is a right which must be recognized now and always, if we are not to become a mutinous rabble . . . Past mutinies," he says a few pages later, " have been against tyrannical governments; but another and more respectable mutiny may break out one day against anarchy and no government at all."

That was said sixty years ago. In 1928 our Chambers of Agriculture reported:

" This country is trying an experiment unique in the world's history—trying to live independently of its natural resources."

The experiment was hopeless twenty years ago: it becomes more dangerous now with every year and month. When England committed herself on merely passing indications, to manufacture and almost destroyed her agricultural and food industries behind her, she took the fearful risks which have matured herself since. " No one," Froude told the Government of his day, " who is not wilfully blind can suppose that such a state of things can continue. If we allow our exclusively industrial system to extend as hitherto, every feature most fraught with danger must increase along with it . . . we invite Ministries no longer to indulge in indolent satisfaction in talk of a ' revival ' of trade, but to look upon it merely as a reprieve, as a breathing-time in which they may take precaution against evil days. . . .

" Let but a severe war or any of the calamities which nature has at command cripple or paralyse trade *for a few successive years*, and half our population may be left to the risk of starvation and to the passions which hunger will necessarily breed. If statesmen wait for other signs, the signs may come at last in the shape of catastrophes in which it will be too late to cry out for a remedy. . . .

" I cannot contemplate the enclosure of the English people within these islands with a mainly manufacturing population, and not feel a misgiving that we shall fail in securing even those material objects to which our other

prospects are to be sacrificed. . . . Is such a state of things a wholesome one? Is it politically safe? Is it morally tolerable?"

These impressive warnings are from his "Short Studies on Great Subjects." He points out that developments outside England and outside England's control *must* check the growth of our manufactures, on which we wholly gambled; therefore "is it necessary that the whole weight of our commonwealth should be thrown on 'trade?' Is there no steadier basis? Unless we can breed a great part of our people in production and occupations more healthy for the future, and for mind and body, there can be found in the coal-pit or workshop —if we can trust to the expansion of towns, we are sacrificing to immediate and mean advantages the stability of the country we have inherited."

We are still bewitched; we have eyes but we do not see; ears, and we hear not. In some quarters there is an almost venomous disinclination to see the basic simple facts, the morbid structure of industrial society we have taken over from a mistaken past (and no longer relevant to world conditions), and the obvious cures which science, health and foresight indicate. Inertia, in face of our crisis, is reinforced by an amazing ingenuity in forging stupid excuses for inaction—"difficulty," forsooth; or the unwillingness of the kept million to do a day's work in the countryside. But collapse and revolt will be immensely more "difficult."

"We are beginning to realize," says Major Elliot, "*how terrible and desperate* is the state of a nation that has forgotten how to raise its own food on its own soil."

Beginning? Now?

A Countryman's Diary

By A. G. Street (Author of "Farmer's Glory")

January 16th.

TRAVELLED home from Norfolk to-day expecting to be welcomed by an admiring household as the breadwinner returning from arduous toil. Instead, I was greeted with a tale of woe. The 'Flu had descended on the farm during my absence. Both the outdoor dairymen, one of the retailers, and the odd man were down with it, and apparently the cows had been milked that afternoon, but only just. My family's attitude was, "You have been jazzing about having a good time this week-end, supposing you do a little honest work now by way of a change." This was coming down to earth with a bump, but there being no help for it, I set the alarum for 4.15 a.m. and went to bed, airily remarking that a little job like milking sixty cows next morning would be child's play to a man of my capabilities. I find that it doesn't do to let one's household know even when one is rattled.

January 17th.

All went well this morning. By five minutes past five my pupil and I had the herd in the corral, the copper fire lit, the engine running merrily, and the first six cows in the process of being milked. But it was cold. As the milking proceeded, I could not help thinking that there is something to be said in favour of mechanization. It does give one a sense of power over one's job, whatever happens. At a push, one man with one of these outfits could deal with a herd of cows quite comfortably. But what a contrast from yesterday morning! Then, at 6 a.m. I was shooting duck in Norfolk; this morning I was milking cows in Wiltshire. £2,000 a year one morning, and 45s. a week the next. And yet some folks think the country dull!

January 19th.

After breakfast the lad who works on the outdoor outfit returned to work. I have never liked him so much

before. We got everything straight before lunch, and I left my pupil aged seventeen, and this lad aged fifteen, to do the afternoon milking on their own. Some more of the retail staff are looking white about the gills, so I expect I shall be let in for a job of work in that branch before long.

January 20th.

I got up early this morning just to make sure that the two lads got started all right. This done, I went back to the dairy. My head roundsman, to whom age and long service in our family have granted the right to treat me still as an irresponsible boy, was not in the best of humours. "One more chap down wi' it, and thee't be vor it," he said, and then he sniffed as though I should be a poorish substitute for either of his milk boys. From a long and intimate acquaintance I know how to translate his sniffs accurately.

January 23rd.

The frost still holds and, what is worse, there is a nasty east wind as an accompaniment—the worst possible conditions for outdoor dairying. When I first began with this system, the milk yield dropped a good deal in cold weather, but now I find a very small drop even with this severe cold. This steadiness in yield is due, I think, to two reasons. One is that there are now about 50 per cent. of the herd that have had a winter or two outdoors and have thereby become acclimatized, and the other is that we know more about the finer points of this job through experience. Little things make all the difference. Putting the hay out in the warmest and most sheltered part of the field; seeing that water is easily available, etc.—I believe cows drink more water in frosty weather. Recently I have installed more water troughs, and I am sure that this helps when the ground is frozen hard. A cow will walk over hard ground to water once daily; but unless it is easy of access she will jib at more journeys, as she becomes tenderfooted.

January 28th.

The 'Flu is attacking the roundsmen. I don't wish to be a spoil sport, but I wish it would thaw, and so do my men. This intense cold makes all their work more difficult.

January 30th.

They say that the report of the Milk Commission will shortly be published. I could give them some first-hand evidence about retailing after to-day's experience. Two more men failed to turn up this morning, so I was awakened at 5 o'clock to take on a round. With a list of names and a man who knew precious little more about them than I, I set off through the drizzling dark with a van-load of bottles. As a milk roundsman, give me slums every time rather than modern town-planning. To deliver milk to a row of houses built flush with the street is a comparatively simple job. You can read the numbers easily with a torch as you drive along, and pop the bottles on the doorsteps in no time. Modern housing raises the milkman's worst passions. First, you cannot see the number until you have opened a wicket gate and walked down a cement path—these were slippery this morning. Then, having found the right house, you proceed round to the side door, tripping over the child's wheelbarrow on the way. Sometimes this happening causes you to say "Bother," or "Dear me," and then the window above opens, and you are asked not to wake the baby. You have to serve the next house, but to do it you have to go back down the path, open and close the gate, walk along to the next gate, and repeat the process. However, when the early morning round is finished, you have a wonderful appetite for breakfast.

January 31st.

Practice, they say, makes perfect. I am not yet the perfect milkman, but I am improving. I found out

yesterday afternoon that one of my customers was a trifle hurt that her bottle of milk had been put in the wrong place yesterday morning. Apparently I had left it at the front door, and it should have been placed on the seat in the side door porch. This morning, when I shone my torch into the porch, I saw an Aberdeen terrier on one seat. I like dogs, but the expression on this one's face seemed to hold no message for me, so I put the milk down on the opposite seat rather gingerly. As I was in the act of doing it, he opened his mouth and yawned in sheer boredom. Who did I think I was? A milkman was beneath his notice. Well, thank God, I'm not proud, except of my service to the consumer.

February 5th.

There's a bit of a jump in this diary here, but I cannot help it. Milk retailing in person, not by proxy, leaves little time for diaries or anything else. It's a whole-time job. However, the men are getting better, and we are through the worst of it. Rumour hath it that to-morrow morning's early round will be my swan song, so to speak. I shall not be sorry even if there is no applause.

February 7th.

At first glance it looks as though the Milk Commission have done their job rather well. The principle that the liquid milk must help to pay for the manufacturing milk will be acceptable to all, I hope, as no scheme can work satisfactorily without this as a basis. Naturally, there will be some heart-searchings in the border-line cases between region and region, but in any case I think that any criticism from farmers will be of a helpful nature. Now that the powers that be are busying themselves with things that really matter to British farming, like meat and milk, the farmers' attitude is to help make these schemes work rather than to hinder them.

February 9th.

There's too much froth in this beer tax argument. In actual fact, barley forms only about 4 per cent. of our farming output, and the bulk of this is feeding barley, not malting. Even in the Eastern Counties the area under barley in 1931 was only 22 per cent. of the *arable* land, and the yield of this crop was only 7·9 per cent. of the gross income of the farming in that district. That same year in East Anglia the dairy cow was responsible for 23·8 per cent., pigs produced 11 per cent., beef 16 per cent., while even the despised hen accounted for over 11 per cent. Whether the British working man is paying too much for his beer is possibly an arguable point, but to attach so much importance to the benefit Great Britain's farming industry would receive from a reduction of the beer duty is to fiddle while Rome is burning—Rome, of course, being our livestock industry. Proportion, gentlemen, proportion!

February 13th.

I heard a good story the other day concerning a local toper of repute some years ago. This supporter of the barley grower made a bet that he could drink a half-gallon pot of beer while the church clock was striking twelve. The other parties to the gamble put a mouse in the beer under the froth. On the first stroke of the clock the toper seized the pot, and swigged the beer off in good time. When the losers paid over the bet, they asked him whether he had found anything in it, and he replied that he thought there was a hop!! In Great Britain's farming malting barley is of less importance than that mouse. More proportion! But who manufactures the froth which is used to cover up these obvious facts?

Foreign Affairs

By Sir Charles Petrie

GERMAN crises, like the Balkans and the poor, are always with us, but the latest of them is undoubtedly the most serious; and when, the other day, one of the new Ministers, Captain Göring, compared the situation on the morrow of Herr Hitler's nomination as Chancellor with that in August, 1914, he may well have been speaking more truly than he knew. How the Germans govern themselves is their affair, and what concerns the rest of the world is the attitude which the Chancellor and his colleagues are likely to adopt towards the international problems that are calling for settlement. In short, is Germany going to be on the side of the angels, and help to save our common civilization, or will she join with the Powers of Darkness to deal its death-blow?

A definite answer to this, as well as to many another, question will not be possible until after the voting has taken place on March 5th. If the Nazis gain an independent majority, then we may look for a reorganization of Germany along what may be described as Fascist lines. If they only get a majority with the support of the Nationalists, we may expect a compromise between the Germany of pre-war days and the Italy of Signor Mussolini, that is to say, a modified revival of the old *bloc* which governed the country from 1871–1918. If, lastly, the existing stalemate is reproduced, the most dangerous situation of all will have been reached, for that will mean that nothing more can be done within the limits of the Constitution of Weimar. In such an event the temptation to the Nazis to execute a *coup d'état* might well prove irresistible, and what the consequences of that would be, both to Germany herself and to the outside world, it is impossible to predict.

The Reaction in Austria

THE first repercussion of events in Berlin has been an increased feeling of insecurity. The neighbours

of Germany have shown a marked, if not unnatural, reluctance to beat any more swords into ploughshares until they have received some assurance that the opposite process is not going to be put into immediate operation by the new masters of the Reich. Even more serious has been the effect in Austria. Demonstrations in favour of Hitler and the *Anschluss* have taken place both in Vienna and Innsbruck, and some idea of what is happening may be gathered from the following extract from a letter received by the present writer from a friend in the latter town, "I do not like the immediate effects of Hitler's accession. There was a nasty torchlight procession in the streets of Innsbruck last night, cheering for Hitler and the *Anschluss*; also a meeting of over 2,000 packing the biggest hall, and yelling for Hitler. I went, and was struck by the way his success has affected the quiet people here."

This sort of thing is sheer madness, and dangerous madness at that. The *Anschluss* has not only been declared illegal by The Hague Court, but any attempt to bring it about would be opposed by France and Italy by force if necessary. It is to be hoped that the German Government will lose no time in intimating to all concerned that it regards such manifestations with disfavour, and an official condemnation of the *Anschluss* itself would also not come amiss. All this, however, makes it only too clear that the Nazi success is already unloosing forces which it may prove beyond the by no means adroit statesmanship of modern Europe to control.

The Best Solution

TAKING all things into consideration, therefore, from the European point of view the most satisfactory outcome of the German crisis would probably be the appearance of a Nazi-Nationalist majority in the new Reichstag, rather than the victory of the Nazis alone. Such being the case a restraining influence, at any rate in foreign affairs, would continue to be exercised by men

like Freiherr von Neurath and Herr Hügenberg, and no encouragement would be given to Pan-German hotheads in Austria and elsewhere.

Hitler is not Mussolini, nor, it may be added, is Germany like Italy. The federal mechanism is intricate in the extreme, and the Nazis are weakest in the South where the centrifugal influences are strongest. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that their ultimate aim is a unified Reich, but it is doubtful if Germany is ready for that. This being the case, unification could only be achieved at the price of civil war, and this, in its turn, would provide the Communists with the opportunity for which they have long been waiting. A Germany at peace with itself is likely to be a more comfortable neighbour to France and Poland than one distracted by civil war. It is, it may be repeated, useless to search for parallels in Italy or elsewhere, and in so far as the Nationalists represent the Conservative force in Germany to-day they will have a steadying effect upon their Nazi allies. After all, they are recruited, unlike the Nazis, from those who have everything to lose and nothing to gain from an upheaval. Furthermore, the continued association of the Nationalists with the Nazis might easily result in the permanent abandonment by the latter of some of the more extreme points in their policy, and that would be to the advantage of Europe as a whole.

Manchuria and the League

THE League of Nations has precipitated a very dangerous situation indeed by its maladroit handling of the Manchurian problem these last few weeks. The Great Powers have been led by the nose by the smaller ones, who have no sort of interest in the Far East, with the result that an attitude has been adopted which will only have unpleasant consequences for the former, and in particular for Great Britain, which will have to choose between China and Japan.

A year ago compromise was possible, but the League

has allowed a situation to grow up which cannot now be settled except by making terms with Japan, and the Lytton Report, though perfectly accurate in what it said, has prevented such a settlement without providing the means of concluding an alternative one. In effect, pacifist diplomacy has signally failed to keep the peace, and, provided that the Chinese armies have not improved, there seems now to be nothing to prevent the Japanese from marching to Pekin and beyond. As Signor Mussolini so truly observed a few months ago, the power of the League becomes attenuated with distance, and when to that distance is added the fallacy of ignoring the fact that East is East and West is West, the present chaos is the result. A little more realism at Geneva would have prevented the danger by which the world is now faced; and, as so often, idealism has produced a situation which is the very reverse of ideal. The members of the Japanese military party, the Kuomintang, and the League of Nations Union are not brothers under the skin. Superficially, the Orient may be Westernized, but fundamentally it is not, as we are now learning to our cost.

The Facts of the Case

ALL this is not to say that the Chinese claim to Manchuria is good either in history or in law. The province has never, in actual fact, been part of China, for, until the fall of the monarchy in 1912, it was administered by military governors under the personal control of the Emperor, in contrast to China Proper, which was under civil Chinese administration. After the revolution, Manchuria was ruled by Chang Tso-Lin for many years as an autonomous State, and on two occasions he proposed alliances to Foreign Powers, without reference to the then Chinese Government. It is true that there has been considerable Chinese immigration, but only because the immigrants wished to escape the anarchy which has marked the rule of the Chinese Republic.

Of course, China refuses to accept these facts, but then her claims to universal sovereignty are notorious. She even went to war with the "barbarous nation of France" in defence of her alleged rights over Annam and Tonkin, and to this day she is unrepresented at Bangkok because she refuses to recognize Siam as an independent kingdom. On the other hand, until Manchukuo gives some evidence of being able to stand by itself, it is only natural that it should be considered a mere Japanese creation. The opponents of Japan point to what happened in Korea, which was successively a protectorate and then a province of Japan, and say that history is merely repeating itself. All of which is an excellent reason for sending a Commission to investigate matters on the spot, but none at all for publishing that Commission's findings before they had been digested by those concerned, and so producing a dilemma which can apparently now be solved by the sword alone.

Latin American Troubles

AT the other end of the world, in South America, the League has also been conspicuously unsuccessful in keeping the peace. For months past there has been sporadic fighting in the Chaco area between Paraguay and Bolivia, though without any official declaration of war, and now hostilities have broken out further north between Colombia and Peru. In view of the amount of unrest in Latin America at the present time, and of its exploitation by Communists, this state of affairs is disquieting in the extreme, especially when it is remembered that fifteen hundred millions of British capital is sunk in that part of the world.

For the League the moral is the same in both Asia and South America. Geneva has made peace rather than justice its watchword, and now it has neither. It has, somewhat blasphemously, assumed that all men were equal in its sight, and it is just discovering that they are not. In short, for more than a decade it has

shown us how not to handle the great international problems, and if our rulers learn the lesson before worse befalls we must account ourselves lucky.

Disturbed Spain

THE fact that Spain has not been much in the news since the suppression of the last Anarchist rising does not mean that the condition of that unhappy country has improved in the interval. On the contrary, things are merely going from bad to worse, and the Royalists, having learnt the lesson of Sanjurjo's premature revolt last August, are wisely biding their time. As a Spanish friend puts it: "Neither the Cabinet nor Parliament retains an atom of prestige, and not only the Republicans but the Socialists are deeply divided among themselves. . . . This group of Republicans and Socialists is still able to control a majority in Parliament merely on account of the fear of an election among the deputies."

Meanwhile, persecution and graft continue to be the order of the day. In Bilbao the police have used their truncheons to disperse a crowd of women who were praying at the foot of the monument to the Sacred Heart in the Plaza de Bélgica, and although the statue in question was erected by public subscription it is now to be destroyed. At the other end of Spain, near Seville, Dr. Marañon, a prominent Republican, is selling a tract of land to the municipality for the construction of a new air-port. It was, it may be observed, this same gentleman who, a few weeks ago, refused the appeal of the French medical profession to take up the case of Dr. Albiñana, interned for political reasons, in the plague-spot of Las Hurdes. The Spanish Republic, like His Satanic Majesty, certainly looks after its own.

The Yugo-Slav Terror

THE internal condition of Yugo-Slavia is clearly going from bad to worse. The persecution of the Croats

has been redoubled, as the case of their leader, Dr. Matchek, clearly proves. He was arrested in a restaurant at Zagreb at the beginning of last month and, without being allowed to bid farewell to his wife and family, was hurried off to Cajnica, in Bosnia, where he is to be interned indefinitely, and without being brought to trial. The heavy hand of Belgrade has also fallen during the past few weeks upon the Slovenes, who have made every effort to co-operate with the Serbs. Father Koroshetz, a former Prime Minister, and two of his lieutenants, have been interned in various places, and without trial. This punishment has been inflicted upon them because of a manifesto of the Slovene Popular Party, of which they are the leaders, advocating the adoption of a federal constitution for Yugo-Slavia.

King Alexander's methods of government are, within certain broad limits, his business, but this continued oppression of minorities is bound, sooner or later, to raise problems that will concern all Europe. Nor is the situation made any more reassuring by the fact that Serbian officers, in an official, though secret, publication, are encouraged to direct their gaze towards "the parts of their fatherland that are still unredeemed," namely, what is now Italian and Albanian territory. In these circumstances, it is easy to see why so much credence should be given to the rumour that King Alexander is openly talking of war with Italy in the spring. A foreign war is an old dodge to divert attention from domestic discontent.

A Dismal Prospect

TAKING all things into consideration, it is impossible to resist the conclusion that, if the outbreak of war is averted during the course of the present year, it will only be by a miracle. The evident determination of the German Government to alter the Versailles settlement, and the alarm caused by this among the neighbours of Germany, particularly in the East and South; the

chaotic condition of Yugo-Slavia, and the temptation to King Alexander to risk everything on the gambler's throw of a foreign war; and the threatening situation in the Far East, exacerbated by the attitude of the League of Nations—all this is ominously reminiscent of the summer of 1914.

Against this possibility there may, indeed, be set the poverty of the world, but that has never yet prevented man from fighting when he had a mind to do so. Pitt believed that the bankruptcy of France would soon compel her to make peace, but he was mistaken; and those who think to-day that financial stringency will avert war are likely to find themselves wrong. In fine, never was the international outlook more gloomy than it is at the present time.

The Two Houses

(*Soliloquy after Francis Thompson.*)

It is little I repair to the gallery above,
Where knight and burgess wrangle down below.
It is little I repair to the gallery above,
Though they still turn on the platitudes I know.
For the red benches hold me with their soporific charm,
And dull my high endeavours with a soft narcotic balm,
And the Spiritual and Temporal mumble low,
Mumble low, mumble low,
O my Maxton and my Kirkwood long ago!

RANKEILLOUR.

The Theatre

By E. D. O'Brien

DURING the first few weeks of this year the theatre was said to have been more deserted than at any time since the early months of the War. This deplorable state of affairs was only in part due to the depression; it was only slightly aggravated by the influenza epidemic which kept normally regular theatre-goers either in their beds or from infectious milieux. While it must have been discouraging for the box office managers (the more so as 1933, in its early months, has produced a number of plays of much higher standard than we have recently seen) the reasons for this theatrical "starving in the midst of plenty" are fundamental and not far to seek. They are high rents, and the absurdly high salaries commanded by the better-known actors.

Before ever it emerges into the glare of the footlights a play to-day must satisfy the wants of perhaps three, perhaps as many as four different parties, none of them "in the business for the sake of their health," and each constituting a heavy addition to the overhead charges of the theatre. There is the ground landlord, who may or may not be the owner of the freehold also; the decorative gentleman known as the Sole Lessee, to whom the theatre is sub-let yearly; and the syndicates who actually produce the plays, to whom the Sole Lessee sublets in turn. No small slice out of the play's problematical profits! No wonder then that one producer, who has built his own theatre, estimates that it is cheaper in the end to pay interest on capital and production costs and build a theatre, than to rent one.

As regards salaries, here the mediæval concept of the "justum pretium" can hardly be said to apply when an actress, however competent, earns twice and thrice as much as a Prime Minister, however much the opposite. The result of overpaying "stars" has been that whereas in

the old days a play could run for months to half-full houses, nowadays directly it ceases to play to capacity, the sagacious producer takes it off, since his production costs are so high that anything less than a full house, or one very nearly so, spells a loss to him.

Indeed it could hardly be otherwise. Recently two leading parts in a play cost £350 a week, and the play—a popular one—ran about half the time it might reasonably have been expected to in consequence. Another quite admirable play ran for a week. It was then taken off for the very excellent reason that at the end of that period it had brought in £120 and cost £1,500. Similarly, a Shakespearean piece, costing some hundreds of pounds a week to stage, took on a Saturday night, in the Christmas holidays, exactly 30s.

When fixed charges are so high that failure is a ruinous business, it is not to be wondered that the average producer is as nervous as a scalded cat, nor can one, however much one deplores any experimentalism in the theatre being left to the arty and crafty gentry who run the Sunday night theatre clubs, blame business men for hankering after what they hope will be "cast-iron successes."

Happily there are signs that owners of theatres, managers, and actors, are alike beginning to realize that half a loaf is better than no bread. Rents are tending—though slowly—to come down: one or two managers, realizing that a belief in the Divine Right of the Legitimate Stage to purvey inferior entertainment is suicidal in the face of the very serious competition of the "talkies," are bringing the price of their seats down; actors' salaries are beginning to fall—though unfortunately the drop has only affected the good actor out of the first flight. But not until the profession as a whole discards its ostrich-like disregard of the laws of supply and demand, will any real improvement in the position of the theatre take place.

Meanwhile, despite this jeremiad, there have

appeared this year a number of plays of a far higher entertainment value than usual.

For the lover of the "thriller"—and I do not normally number myself among them—there is "Ten Minute Alibi," by Anthony Armstrong. Happily there was beside me, during the performance, a friend who had seen the dress rehearsal to reassure me that "it all comes right in the end." Nevertheless before curtain fall I suffered agonies of pleasant apprehension and at it was left amazed at the ingenuity with which Mr. Armstrong builds up his plot in this excellent play. "Mother of Pearl" is a musical comedy sufficiently far above the average to appeal to others besides the "tired business man." The music is pleasant enough, but my admiration for Mr. A. P. Herbert stops short of him as a librettist. On the whole there is little to this somewhat spindle-shanked production (let me hastily add that there is no chorus) beyond the acting of Mme. Delysia—but that little is more than enough. "Double Harness," in which Mary Ellis gives a fine individual performance, is a straight comedy of manners of the type in which the French excel. I remember the "analyse" of a play in a small French resort naïvely confessing "Certes, la pièce n'est pas d'une moralité absolue." Certes, this is not either, but it is admirably contrived and extremely well acted. With "Dinner at Eight" the only fault I could find—apart from a weak final curtain—springs from my general hatred of translations. American, let us realize it, is as much a foreign language as French. When a Frenchman says "l'amour, c'est une flamme! pfft!" (expressive gesture of fingertips) he expresses in phrase and gesture a world of cynical wisdom and denied sentimentality. The Englishman, on the other hand, saying "Love is a flame" sounds merely silly. Similarly, in the mouth of the English actor the "wise-crack" sounds flat, and this play, as acted by them, is much what I imagine a translated Guitry comedy would be like: that is to say, the whole thing goes at

just half the pace it should. There is, moreover, one flagrant example of half-translation. Carole Goodner plays the typical corn-crake voiced American blonde in one scene so much faster than her English stage husband that one has an irresistible desire to stick something sharp into him. It is a pity because it is otherwise an excellent play and the author, George S. Kaufman, could give a lesson or two in spare and forceful construction to some of our own products.

Finally we come to "The Streets of London," Dion Boucicault's revived Victorian "melodrammer." I have seen this play twice: I could see it many times more, so much did I enjoy myself.

It is glorious in its unintentioned humour, captivating in its interspersed, if on occasion somewhat anachronistic, tunes, magnificently full-blooded in its dramatic quality. Right is worsted, wrong triumphs, but the roles are reversed in the end. And how downright it is! Black was black, and white was white and there was none of your modern moral twilight about the Victorians. And those who, seeing this play, are inclined to sneer at the Victorians, exclaiming "how ridiculous they were!" should remember that to them the theatre still had much of its symbolism left. Their sentimentalities and sincerities meant as much to them as the moral teachings of Jedermann to a 14th century Berman Burgher. The theatre can often provide the historian with the best clue to the spirit of the period. Had I been a Victorian I had rather been judged by a "Streets of London" than feel as a modern that the spirit of my age was mirrored in a "For Services Rendered."

LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

Edited by **HERBERT AGAR**

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Literary Notes

By Herbert Agar

The Immorality of Our Money System

"MONARCHY or Money Power," by R. McNair Wilson (Eyre and Spottiswoode), is an important book. It combines an attack on the Money System under which the world grows rickety with a picture of an alternative system which could change the machine age from a curse into a potential blessing. And the whole argument is related to the moral values on which the Western world rests. It is here that Dr. Wilson, writing from the Conservative position, gains the authority and persuasiveness that make his book memorable. The Socialist can watch the world's mounting agony with something approaching satisfaction. His heart is given to an economic theory and to an ancient grudge; the breakdown of the present system seems to justify the theory, meanwhile indulging the grudge. The Left receives the news of a way out which does not involve the ruin of Capitalism (or even of Christianity) with a hostility which suggests that such ruin is too dear a daydream to abandon. And the Liberal is handicapped in attempting to face the money-problem by the fact that he must still prefer Free Trade even if it has to be carried on by birds or insects after the last man has starved faithfully to death. It is only

by starting with a moral rather than an economic principle that the issue can be faced frankly. And it is this which Dr. Wilson, as a Conservative, has done. He keeps before him a clear picture of the type of man our society should breed, of his dignity as man and Christian, his independence, his responsibility. With this in mind, the problem defines itself: it is to find a way of running our mechanized society that will provide at least as much chance to develop these qualities as was provided in the pre-industrial world. By such a test, the present system is clearly abominable; and, equally clearly, the best way out is not by the creation of a tyrant Communist State. Yet no one with a conscience dare affirm that the world, having just stumbled on an Arabian Nights' miracle of productive power, must therefore submit to long-drawn-out decay. But where is the escape?

Dr. Wilson's answer to this question is simple and compelling. The root of the evil, he declares, lies in the money system; and he proceeds to show why that system must bankrupt mankind economically through its confusion between real credit and financial credit, and must bankrupt mankind morally through its exaltation of the motive of greed at the expense of the motive of duty. It is the simultaneous consideration of these two aspects of the tragedy which gives "Monarchy or Money Power" its distinction, and which should assure it the careful attention of Conservatives. As Dr. Wilson repeatedly points out, much of the economic analysis has been made before; but it is here presented in its proper moral setting, and in the light of Western history from the French Revolution to the present. Previous writings in the same field (notably Major C. H. Douglas's books on the problem of credit) have been ignored with a startling thoroughness; but if Conservatives ignore Dr. Wilson's lucid and eloquent work they will be doing a disservice to their cause. Here is a true description of our malady and a wise suggestion for its cure—a

suggestion that is acceptable both on the economic and the moral plane.

A number of Dr. Wilson's historical judgments are unconventional, and hostile critics may treat the book as if these were the main issue, thus ignoring the vital problem to which the book, in fact, is devoted: the problem of how to change—quickly, while there is yet time—the social and economic conditions which are making it almost impossible for the mass of mankind to preserve hope, or virtue, or self-respect. The Radical, rightly indignant, would solve this problem by destroying what is left of the basic, and healthy, institutions of our world: private property, the family, the Christian view of life. Dr. Wilson, the Conservative, proposes that these be retained, and that our one thoroughly diseased institution, our money system, be renovated. The proposal deserves a hearing.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti

THE Cambridge University Press is continuing its "Poets in Brief," the excellent volumes of selections under the editorship of Mr. F. L. Lucas. The two most recent volumes to appear are selections from Crabbe and from Dante Gabriel Rossetti. In both cases, the introductions combine wit and sympathy and good criticism. The Rossetti anthology is particularly timely, for this poet is both underrated and misinterpreted to-day.

Even for a poet, Rossetti made an extravagant response to life's physical beauty, a response which was Greek, or Elizabethan, in its intensity, and which led him to an Hellenic delight in youth combined with an Hellenic sense of the mournfulness of all things transient. Neither in the Classical world, nor during the Renaissance, did any poet surpass Rossetti in expressing the sadness that afflicts those whose ideal is secular beauty and the immediate richness of experience. "It was natural," writes Mr. Lucas, "that Rossetti, who had, I think, a passion for the loveliness of life more violent than

any English poet, even Keats, should so soon exchange his youthful freshness for this brooding, haunted sense of lost days and vanished hours, that he saw standing like phantoms before him, 'sleepless, with cold commemorative eyes.'"

The elegiac note in Rossetti was complicated and intensified by feelings from which the Greeks appear to have been almost immune. The pagan mind could concentrate on profane experience, with an unsentimental joy or grief, and with no remorse. The Christian mind cannot. Rossetti was by inclination a pagan. Had he been nurtured in the Christian Church of his own Mediterranean world, he might have made an accommodation with his paganism and won freedom to work in peace. But on this northern shore he never found peace. A Protestant by environment, a Catholic by race, a pagan at heart, his spirit knew no home; his life became progressively disorganized; his verse carried an ever-increasing load of guilt.

> Look in my face; my name is Might-have-been;
> I am also called No-more, Too-late, Farewell;
> Unto thine ear I hold the dead-sea shell
> Cast up thy Life's foam-fretted feet between;
> Unto thine eyes the glass where that is seen
> Which had Life's form and Love's, but by my spell
> Is now a shaken shadow intolerable,
> Of ultimate things unuttered the frail screen.

As the remorse grew, there naturally grew with it the desire to escape from memory:

> What whisperest thou? Nay, why
> Name the dead hours? I mind them well:
> Their ghosts in many darkened doorways dwell
> With desolate eyes to know them by.

But the artist must not escape from his "dead hours," however desolate, for in them lies all the richness, all the intensity of experience, that he has gathered during his life. In the end, however, the burden grew too heavy for Rossetti: he escaped into drugs and table-

rapping. But before that happened, he had known life, and pictured it, as beauty incarnate:

> Under the arch of Life, where love and death,
> Terror and mystery, guard her shrine, I saw
> Beauty enthroned; and though her gaze struck awe,
> I drew it in as simply as my breath.

It is tragic to watch a poet, driven by inner disharmony, decline from such clear pleasure in life to the days,

> When vain desire at last and vain regret
> Go hand in hand to death, and all is vain.

For those who can share his direct, physical awareness of beauty, which finds expression in a vividness of imagery and symbolism that few poets rival, and for those who have ever known the nameless, enervating remorse which grows on the spirit at war with itself, Rossetti will seem a major poet. Yet it is impossible to name him a major poet in the absolute sense: his range of experience is too limited and too uncommon. But within that range he is not surpassed; and the present tendency to consider him a mere æsthete is absurd.

James Boswell*

By Hugh Kingsmill

PROFESSOR VULLIAMY has given a very vigorous and readable account of Boswell's extraordinary career. He has in particular placed the relations of Boswell and Johnson in their right perspective, exposing both the unreality of Carlyle's plea that Boswell was animated by reverence for Johnson, and the later view that Boswell created Johnson as Shakespeare created Falstaff. "The Life of Johnson," he says, "is not a complete portrait; it is very far from being such a thing," and elsewhere he sums up Boswell's attitude to Johnson in ten words: "He found æsthetic delight in treating Johnson as a spectacle."

* JAMES BOSWELL. By Professor C. E. VULLIAMY. (Geoffrey Bles. 10s. 6d.)

The clue to Boswell's genius is contained in this sentence, but unfortunately Professor Vulliamy does not follow the clue up. He is far too much occupied with Boswell as the victim of life, and far too little conscious of Boswell as the spectator of life. "He was an unbalanced character," Professor Vulliamy writes, "swept away by a too voracious appetite for life in every conceivable form, and a too ardent desire to feel the unmitigated force of every conceivable emotion." If this were the whole truth about Boswell, his name would have died with him. He is remembered not for his voracious appetite for life, but for his impersonal interest in his voracious appetite for life. Had he possessed a character strong enough to unify his impressions of men and things, he would have been a great dramatic poet. As it is, he could only give a number of disconnected pictures, but each picture is as vivid as the reality it portrays. To achieve this vividness, he willingly and consciously sacrificed his own dignity, reproached Boswell for what was his highest quality: "Everything which another man would have hidden, everything the publication of which would have made another man hang himself, was matter of gay and clamorous exultation to his weak and diseased mind." Professor Vulliamy echoes the complaint, choosing for especial denunciation one of the finest scenes in Boswell. During a storm at sea, among the Hebrides, Boswell became terrified, and to keep him quiet the pilot gave him a rope to pull. The rope was fixed to the top of one of the masts, and "if I had considered the matter," Boswell writes, "I might have seen that this could not be of the least service; but his object was to keep me out of the way of those who were busy working the vessel."

Johnson meanwhile was lying in a bunk, with a greyhound at his back to keep him warm, and was discovered "in philosophick tranquillity" by Boswell, when the ship at last reached harbour.

It ought not to be necessary to point out that

Johnson's impassivity is brought home to the reader with double force by the contrast with Boswell's panic. Yet Professor Vulliamy, in special reference to what he calls "the episode of the rope," writes: "These pointless exhibitions of folly and weakness—there are many of them in the published work of Boswell—are to be explained, if they must be explained, as the symptoms of inverted egoism and the indications of a state of mind not compatible with ordinary standards of sanity."

By "the ordinary standards of sanity" Professor Vulliamy clearly means nothing more impressive than the lack of candour which distinguishes most men when their weaknesses are in question. A sane man would have written: "Dr. Johnson, wisely, perhaps, preferred to go below as soon as the storm became really violent, but I was unwilling to miss so novel an experience, and insisted on remaining on deck, I fear at some inconvenience to the gallant men who were forcing the vessel through the dangers which threatened at each moment to engulf her." But sanity of this kind is incompatible with a genius for biography.

By treating Boswell's candour about himself as yet another of his moral infirmities, Professor Vulliamy turns Boswell into a freak, a feat already performed by Macaulay. But freaks do not write works of genius. Boswell, like every other writer, illustrates the interdependence of character and intellectual achievement. Had he been able to control his weaknesses as a man, his biography of Johnson would have been proportionately a better book. As in his life he passed from one woman to another, and from one bout of drinking to the next, so in his Johnson he passed from episode to episode, and the book is therefore as disconnected as his personal existence. But it remains a work of genius. Professor Vulliamy, through treating Boswell's power of seeing himself from the outside as merely another proof of the lurking insanity which he insists on as the clue to Boswell's life, arrives at a final conclusion which has no

relevance at all to what was peculiar and valuable in Boswell. "The story of this unfortunate man—for so he was—" Professor Vulliamy writes, "is the story of one who was doomed by a nameless, incurable and persistent malady of the mind. If there is a moral here, it is a purely eugenic moral in forms of exogamous marriages."

The tone of this dismissal seems to be assumed to support Professor Vulliamy in his illusion that he has borrowed from science a method of writing about men, superior to that formerly in use. He is, in fact, as full of prejudices, moral and social, as Macaulay himself, but lacks Macaulay's faith in the validity of his prejudices, and therefore retreats behind that assumption of impartiality which Lytton Strachey used with such effect to discredit whatever qualities in others aroused his envy or dislike.

"Modern Thought"*

By R. E. Hobart

MR. JOAD has written a lucid and vivid book about the art of running off the track. Not that he offers any cruel exposure of the art. He cheerfully and sociably runs off with the rest, and runs considerably harder than they. His subject is the influence of recent developments of scientific knowledge on current thought about the ultimate problems of life and the world. Now, recent results of experiment are one thing and the impressions and speculations starting impulsively therefrom are another. There rises between the two the inexorable question: How far do these speculations strictly follow from those results? Mr. Joad's book should have been called "Guide to the Latest Fashions in Would-be Scientific World-Thought." Hasty inference

* "Guide to Modern Thought." By C. E. M. Joad. (Faber & Faber. 6s.)

is always with us, it is our *damnosa haereditas*, but it is not wholesome that it should speak with any of the air and authority of science.

"Modern Thought," i.e. contemporary speculation about ultimate matters, as influenced by striking observations and hypotheses in physics, etc., is naturally assumed by the reader to be the best thought. Has it not all the benefit of past efforts, together with startling fresh knowledge and the maturity of a longer reprospect? If only it had! As it is, the modern thought that Mr. Joad's excellent and often clever expositions represent is largely an illustration of the text, "One truth sets as another rises,"—and old errors rise again as newer ones sink below the horizon. For example, Mr. Joad's conception of life as a non-material "principle or activity other than and in addition to" the matter which it inhabits is a specimen of the medieval type of explanation which preceded the birth of modern science, served up as its very latest product. It is our old friend the vital principle, own brother to that other *causa occulta*, the alchemic essence. Instead of analysing the phenomenon to see how its parts work together to make up the complex whole (the method of science) it regards most of them as relatively lifeless clods and imagines some wonderful, vague and entirely unanalysed "principle" or entity that dwells within and accomplishes the whole business. Where "the whole is more than the parts" the scientific method would ask: "What are the parts? What are their relations? Under just what conditions does the 'more' arise?" The birth of genuine science consisted in discerning that explanation by a "principle" was no explanation at all. Mr. Joad describes the principle as "non-material," but as located, as being in space. Is this modern thought? To think as though Descartes, Berkeley, Hume, Kant had never lived? (For they made a common contribution, apart from their respective conclusions.) If it is something, and is located, then it is objective fact in space, like the constituents of matter;

what exactly is meant by calling it non-material? Oh, simply that it shall be regarded as elusive, as privileged, and not to be analysed or too closely inspected by the inquirer. What is it in itself? What does it consist in? If he cannot suggest how it is constituted, then he has really proposed no hypothesis at all. One feels as brutal in asking these questions as if one turned on the light at a spiritist séance.

The very strong flavour of folklore in this most recent decoction of science prepares us for the author's inclusion of the phenomena of such séances amongst the discoveries that influence modern thought. He mentions "views of the universe . . . which make no provision for such phenomena and are unable *therefore* to countenance the supposition that they are genuine." The emphasis is ours. Such views shamelessly violate the first obligations of honest thought. The question is not whether our existing views make provision for such things, but whether they are real, whether the phenomena on investigation prove to be what they seem. "I have seen a handkerchief lift itself into the air," etc. No, pardon us, he has seen a handkerchief rise in the air. What caused it to rise he cannot say without a painstaking and expert examination, at the moment, of that portion of space, which examination he does not profess to have made. The sad fact about these séances is that such investigation, when by persistence it is accomplished despite dim light and that consummate management of the sitters' attention (quite unknown to them) which is one of the medium's chief arts, makes the mystery shrivel so miserably. Mr. Joad does not remember or has not studied certain past exposures of mediums, just as he does not remember or has not studied the nineteenth-century thought about matter, of which this book gives so misleading an account that it cannot even be called a caricature. How characteristic of our human intellect to explain and spin theories about "ectoplasm" (the magical substance that is supposed to emanate from

the medium's body) before we know that it exists! M. Bergson, who holds a similar but in one respect more sober vitalism, also had a leaning to such séances and, along with others, was imposed upon by Madame Eusapia Paladino, subsequently exposed.

The book certainly gives us a clear survey of certain species of contemporary thought—and makes us exclaim: "What waste!" What waste of intellectual ability and energy, for want of intellectual caution and thoroughness! Ability and energy that could well achieve the solid things so profoundly needed. This applies to various writers and modes of thinking summarized, and to Mr. Joad as well. His facility and swiftness, his force and imagination as an expositor, his general mental competence—these are powers, and he has turned them into perils. He has let them betray him into shallowness. There is one crowning example, the most important because so much of his thinking turns upon it. In a book undertaking to give us the position of modern thought he lightly assumes that freewill and determination are irreconcilable. The view that freedom is a fact of experience and determinism merely the psychological analysis of that fact, that the whole controversy has been based upon a misunderstanding, has apparently not occurred to him, nor does he seem to be acquainted with the fairly extensive literature that maintains it.

St. Augustine

ST. AUGUSTINE. By REBECCA WEST. (Peter Davies, Limited, 1933 pp. 174. 5s.)

WRITERS on St. Augustine of Hippo are seldom impartial. It seems to be his lot to excite either passionate admiration or hate, and on opening the pages of this new biography of him by Miss Rebecca West, one could not help wondering whether she would be for him or against him. It was a real pleasure to find from the start that there was to be nothing mean or supercilious in this life; that we were, in fact, to have a frank and very human study of a man fully recognized to be great, by a woman both

exceptionally intelligent and generous in her judgments. Here for the first time, so far as I know, is Augustine painted by a woman, and it comes with a surprise to find how suitable a subject he is. Few books have been so thumbed as the Confessions, and wise and unwise men have commented and speculated upon them, till there seemed little more to be said; and yet now, in 1933, Miss West comes along, has a long look at Monnica and her son, and startles us with her feminine intuitions of the relations between the two and their behaviour to the much-abused father, Patricius. I do not agree with all of Miss West's judgments or intuitions, but I, and all, I think, will be grateful to her for the many new suggestions contained in her book and for the, at times, brilliant, and always fascinating, study of " one of the greatest of all writers," who " works in the same introspective field as the moderns."

Some reviewers have been irritated by Miss West's habit of comparing Augustine to moderns like Tolstoy and Proust and D. H. Lawrence, but many readers, I suspect, will need some such points of reference to enable them to pass back over the centuries and get close to Augustine. The one danger is that the secret of Augustine's life which makes all the difference may thus be partly missed, and if criticism be needed, it is here that this biography falls short of the whole truth. It is exceptionally sympathetic in its understanding of some of the most paradoxical and difficult of Augustine's views, such as grace and freewill, faith and reason, but she does not quite see that he was telling the exact truth when he made his Confessions the story of love between God and himself and called the Church the marvellous mystery of that union. She says that " for him there was then and thereafter to be nothing in the universe save his mother and her son," whereas Augustine says that he sought to know nothing save God and his soul, " that all abundance which is not my God to me is only poverty." I am sure that here St. Augustine is a better interpreter of himself than Miss West, and that, consequently, her account of the ecstasy at Ostia and of his life as a bishop must be readjusted. But if Miss West does not do full justice to the saint, she has given us a fresh and generous appreciation of the man, and for that one, who is very sensitive to Augustine's honour, thanks her.

M. C. D'ARCY.

Metternich

METTERNICH. By ALGERNON CECIL.

METTERNICH AND THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT FROM 1809 TO 1813. By C. S. B. BUCKLAND.

SINCE the close of the World War there has been a notable revival in the study of the French Revolutionary period and the Restoration period from 1814 to 1830 or 1848. The work on the Revolution has been mainly French, but the work on the period from 1814 onwards has been done chiefly by English scholars or by Austrian. In English there are Professor Temperley's work on Canning, Professor Webster's on Castlereagh, and recently Mr. Duff Cooper's Talleyrand. In Austria a magnificent biography of Metternich has been produced by Srbik. And just as Professor Webster's book greatly raised the reputation of Castlereagh, so Srbik's massive and sane treatment of Metternich has altered the attitude of Liberal Europe towards that statesman.

Mr. Cecil approaches Metternich from an obviously conservative point of view. He is sympathetic to the cause of European order and stability for which Metternich stood. Writing from this point of view, he is most successful in dealing with the post-1814 period. The first part of the book, down to 1814, is certainly worth reading, too. It is a well-written appreciation of the Napoleonic Age, lightly touched-in, with picturesque descriptions and witty judgments. Mr. Cecil, however, does not seem to come into his own until he has disposed of Napoleon and has reached the Congress of Vienna. After that, the subject is very congenial, for it is the European and Christian family of states, the idea which Metternich sincerely and persistently held, and which must always attract all men of good will. Mr. Cecil's *forte* is a pleasant combination of a correct and restrained handling of historical material, with a graceful style, a pretty allusiveness, ability to sketch characters surely, lightly, briefly, an absence of national prejudice, and an eye steadily directed to Europe and to Western civilization as a whole.

Mr. Buckland's book is a work of a different order, covering as it does less than five years of a particular aspect of history. Mr. Buckland is one of the younger products of the Oxford School of Modern History. His book, from the point of view of the particular task which he has set himself, is a model. The material which it contains is beautifully marshalled and referenced. It is also, intrinsically, a valuable contribution to the study of

the Napoleonic period, particularly in respect of the activities of the British secret service. The amazing activity of the British Foreign Office on the Continent of Europe during the time of Napoleon's greatest power is made manifest, almost entirely from original, unprinted documents. R. B. MOWAT.

A Philosophic Poem

URIEL: A HYMN IN PRAISE OF DIVINE IMMANENCE. By WILLIAM FORCE STEAD. (Cobden-Sanderson. 3s. 6d.)

IT is almost startlingly original nowadays for a poet to speak from within the fold of an orthodox religious creed. Mr. Force Stead presents all that is positive and inspired in the Christian faith; its benevolence, its simple piety, and its element of mystical fire with which we are already familiar in the poems of George Herbert and the solitudes of Samuel Johnson.

In intellectual content Mr. Force Stead is not quite orthodox, for his poem, as its sub-title implies, is based more on the doctrines of Spinoza than on the Thirty-nine Articles. He loses nothing by thus breaking bounds. An art has everything to gain by feeding upon a philosophy that aims at a conception of a coherent universe. Mr. Force Stead has re-enforced his principle by reference to Bergson and to General Smuts; but the reference is unnecessary, for the argument of the poem is sufficiently valid and familiar. Spinoza's *substance* is personified by Uriel, the archangel of light who irradiates all things, as the universal vicar of the godhead whom the poet will not dare to invoke. The poem is divided into six parts, showing progressive stages (by means of lyrical passages in a loosely-made ode form) of the realization of the idea of cosmic unity. I find Part 4 the most inspired. Oddly enough, it is the part which most clearly shows why the author is a Churchman. It is the least intellectualized, and in its appreciation of the genius of Gothic architecture, the poet has been able to see more clear evidence of the universal pattern than he has done when contemplating the bewildering variety of wild nature. RICHARD CHURCH.

Creative Evolution

THE MECHANISM OF CREATIVE EVOLUTION. By C. C. HURST. (Cambridge University Press. 21s.)

SINCE Gregor Mendel disclosed the particulate nature of inheritance and demonstrated the principle of the segregation of genetic factors, the study of the problems of heredity, species, and evolution, has found an experimental basis. Morgan's now famous researches on the chromosomes have been especially fruitful, and in the demonstration of such genetic phenomena as genemutation, chromosome reduplication, linkage, polyploidy, and so forth, we have a basis of factual data that may result, in due course, in the construction of a scientific theory of evolution. Meanwhile, all this work in genetics is important, because it has already yielded valuable results in the breeding of animals and plants for food, to consider only one sphere of its usefulness.

Dr. Hurst recapitulates the story of the development of Mendelian genetics with commendable simplicity. He gives special and extended attention to the work on chromosomes, his object being to show that the mechanism of heredity so far disclosed is an essential part of the mechanism of "creative evolution"—"which," he says, "may be simply defined as the origin of new genetical species from old ones"—begging, you will observe, both the questions of creation and evolution.

Here we have all the assumptions about "Creative Evolution" common to the school of Professor J. B. S. Haldane, Fisher, and the rest who affirm their faith in a Darwinian "Natural Selection," with a doggedness that does more credit to their loyalty and patriotism than to their science (*vide* ENGLISH REVIEW, July, 1932). To say that "on the whole the definite opponents of Darwinism among biologists are a small minority" (as if scientific truth depends on majorities), and that "the theory of natural selection is now accepted by biologists as a primary law of nature," is to stamp one's self more insular than scientific. The tendency so to rely on assertion in place of evidence must weaken any case. In the same way, the assumption of an evolution of mind co-incident with and similar to the graduated somatic changes used to demonstrate evolution appears to be the result of monism rather than scientific study. Nevertheless, Dr. Hurst's thesis is carefully and lucidly developed, generously illustrated, and eminently readable.

G. C. HESELTINE.

Glossary

(Of terms most commonly used to praise current books.

COURAGEOUS - Means the author has not shirked the painful duty of dealing at some length with Sex.

DARING - - Means the author has not denied himself the pleasure of dealing at some length with Sex.

EPIC - - - Any novel weighing over three pounds.

EPIGRAMMATIC - Conclusions, with the arguments leading up to them omitted. (*See* PROFOUND.)

FRANK - - (Of fiction.) Bringing the skeletons out of other people's cupboards.

HONEST - - (Of autobiography.) Bringing the skeletons out of the author's cupboards.

MEMORABLE - Means the reviewer remembered the next day what the book was about.

ORIGINAL - - Written by someone who has not learned how to write. (*See* SHEERBEAUTY.)

PROFOUND - - Arguments which lead to no conclusions. (*See* EPIGRAMMATIC.)

SHEERBEAUTY - Written by someone who *has* learned to write. May or may not have anything to write about. (*See* ORIGINAL.)

TRAGEDY - - Any story which shows that futile people lead futile lives.

WISE - - - Any novel which shows (*a*) that all ideas are equally true or/and equally false; or (*b*) that Cleopatra was just like the girl next door. (*See* WITTY.)

WITTY - - - Always goes with WISE—probably to reassure you that the Wisdom won't hurt.

ELEANOR CARROLL CHILTON.

Books Recommended

The following is a selected list of books just published or to be published shortly :—

HISTORY, POLITICS, BIOGRAPHY.

THE LIFE OF PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY. Edited by HUMBERT WOLFE. II Vols. (Dent. 15s.)

THE LIFE OF RICHARD WAGNER. ERNEST NEWMAN. Vol. I : 1813–1848. (Cassell. 25s.)

SAVAGE PILGRIMAGE. CATHERINE CARSWELL. (Secker. 7s. 6d.)

E. NESBIT. DORIS LANGLEY MOORE. (Benn. 15s.)

THE OXENDEN LETTERS, 1607–1642. Ed. by DOROTHY GARDINER. (Constable. 12s. 6d.)

ESSAYS AND CRITICISM.

THE LOST LEADER : A STUDY OF WORDSWORTH. HUGH I'ANSON FAUSSET. (Cape. 12s. 6d.)

THE ENGLISH MUSE. OLIVER ELTON. (Bell. 16s.)

HAVE WE LOST GOD ? Edited by W. R. TITTERTON. (Grayson & Grayson. 7s. 6d.)

THE IMMORTAL SEA. CLIFFORD BAX. (Lovat Dickson. 7s. 6d.)

FICTION.

THE QUICK AND THE DEAD. GERALD BULLETT. (Heinemann. 6s.)

HUMAN BEING. CHRISTOPHER MORLEY. (Faber & Faber. 7s. 6d.)

ENGLAND, THEIR ENGLAND. A. G. MACDONELL. (Macmillan. 7s. 6d.)

WANTON MALLY. BOOTH TARKINGTON. (Heinemann. 7s. 6d.)

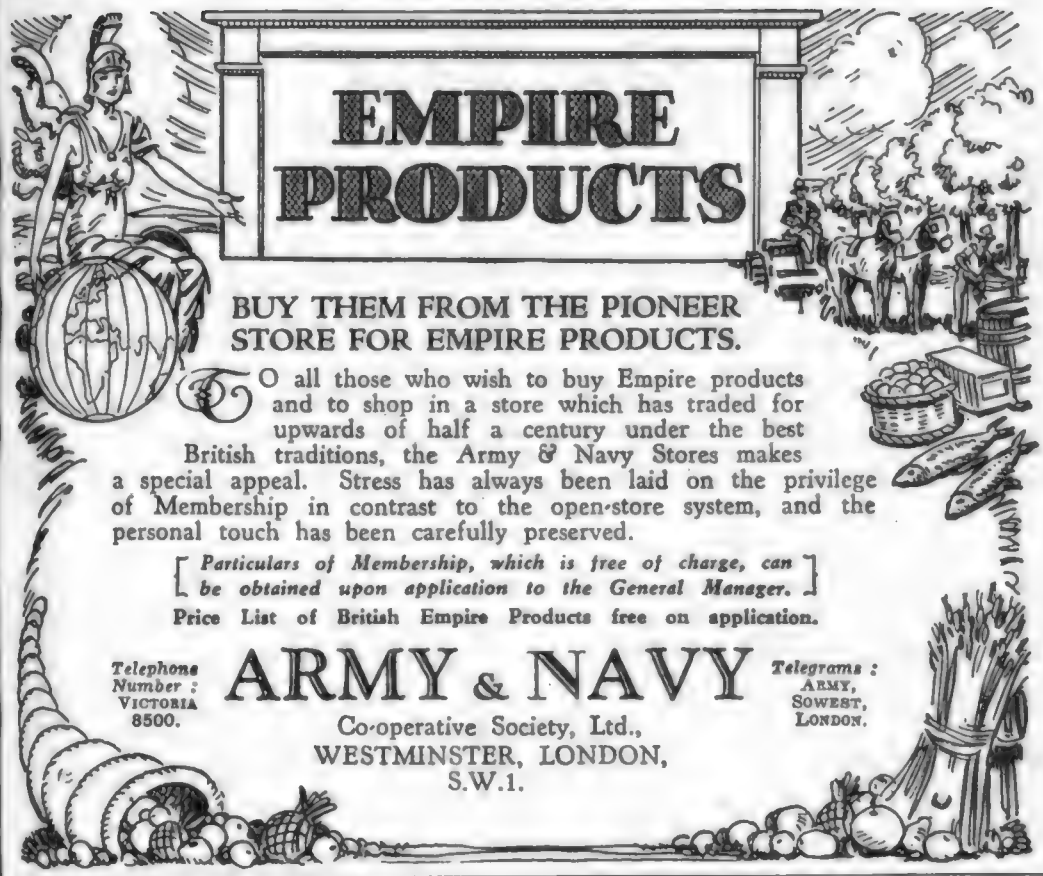
THE GOLD FALCON, or THE HAGGARD OF LOVE. (Faber & Faber. 7s. 6d.)

THRILLERS.

MURDER MUST ADVERTISE. DOROTHY L. SAYERS. (Gollancz. 7s. 6d.)

THE SAPPHIRE. A. E. W. MASON. (Hodder & Stoughton. 7s. 6d.)

THE MURDER OF STEVEN KESTER. (Eyre and Spottiswoode. 7s. 6d.)



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Club Gossip

By Quid Nunc

WE are on the right side of the year, and when March is out hearts and hopes are higher than at any other time. The world of outdoor sports asserts itself and London will begin to fill up with visitors from abroad. Despite all the financial happenings in the States, many Americans will come across the Atlantic, for the exchange is still in their favour and the attraction of the Old World is irresistible. Great Britain is still the holiday magnet to ninety per cent. of the Americans. The land of Shakespeare and Milton, of glorious Cathedrals and venerable ruins, of Plymouth Hoe and Westminster Abbey, of Ascot and Cowes, of the Tattoo and the Trooping, of roast beef and especially good beer has an amazing attraction to young America. It is the ambition of every young American to travel to and through the British Isles, if money can be raised for the holiday.

* * *

A FAMOUS Strand Restaurant has returned to its grill, and the marvel is that it has taken seventeen years to restore what was once, and will quickly be again, a most popular feature known and appreciated far beyond the Homeland. In 1916 its chops were of such a size and quality that each chop exceeded the meat allowance laid down by the Government, and so the grill came to a "noble" war end. Some American visitors will be able to recall old memories, for it was over a chop that I saw one sturdy Yankee drink two quarts of beer, almost without taking a breath, out of a fine silver quart tankard which would rejoice the heart of anyone to have on their sideboard.

* * *

WRITING of good food, I am reminded that the Lord Mayor is reviving past glories of the Thames at midsummer. He will travel in State down to the Greenwich pageant and there at a famous riverside hotel he and some of the chosen elect of the Cabinet, who appreciate the good things of the table, will enjoy a whitebait dinner in a famous riverside hotel. It was an ancient custom for Lord Mayors to "process" in barges down the Thames, but great pageants on the Thames have been lacking sadly in past years. Indeed, I recall but one, just after the war, when there was a Royal procession, and the King's barge was the envy of all river men.

In other days of Victorian times whitebait dinners at Greenwich were frequently indulged in by politicians, but the Tories dined at one hotel and the Liberals at another. Shades of Disraeli and Gladstone!

* * *

LORD LONDONDERRY is taking the keenest interest in an auction—the 1933 Auction—which is to be held on the evening of May 9 at Londonderry House, with all its historic background of glamour in romance and art. It would be difficult to find a finer setting for such an auction, and especially one held at night, when the soft lights of many chandeliers falls upon the magnificent collection of old furniture and priceless pictures which adorn the walls. Happily it is not Lord Londonderry's goods which are being sold, for their dissipation would be a tragedy, but it is none the less a collection of unique treasures, which in such "a sale room" should incite big prices in aid of the working class housing project on the Pulford Street site in Westminster.

* * *

MANY distinguished people are assisting in this good work, and offering for sale their treasures. Sir James Barrie sends his MS. of "Shall we join the Ladies?" and of other literary gems will be First Editions of John Masefield, Hugh Walpole, Sir Owen Seaman, Lord Dunsany, J. B. Priestley and Rudyard Kipling, whilst I must not forget a First Edition of Sheriff's "Journey's End" and MSS. of John Galsworthy's "The First and Last," of Charles Morgan's only short story and other short stories by Maeterlinck and Eric Linklater.

* * *

PICTURES have been given by Professor Anning Bell, Stanhope Forbes, Mrs. Stanhope Forbes, Cecil Hunt, Fred Taylor, Keith Henderson, Terrick Williams and Bertram Nicholls; original drawings by Phil May and David Low, two cartoons by G. K. Chesterton, while Oswald Birley and Simon Elwes are each presenting a blank canvas and Mrs. Anning Bell has promised to make a charcoal drawing of the purchaser.

Those who are interested in *Famille-rose* and *Famille-verte* will find some fine pieces awaiting a new home, and there is a fifth-century Greek vase which should create spirited competition. Let me recommend all visitors to obtain for 5s. the catalogue from the Organizing Secretary, 1933 Auction, 65, Victoria Street, S.W., which includes an invitation to the sale. Lady Diana Cooper is President and the Marchioness of Reading Chairman of the Committee.

* * *

WITH another Dublin Hospital Sweep on the Derby closing within five weeks, there are critics of the drum as the best method of drawing the winners in the sweepstakes. This is natural, at least with those who "try, try again" and never get any luck. But apart from this, I think myself that the use of a drum whether filled or half filled with paper

(*Continued overleaf*)

★

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Club Gossip—*continued.*

counterfoils is not the best method. For paper will not mix and nothing will make it do so. The counterfoils which are on the outer sides of the mass of foils in the drum will remain on those surfaces as the mass of foils in the centre becomes pressed down, and the fuller the drum is the more tight becomes this central mass.

* * *

I WILL be told, however, that the mixing process made the draw quite fair. To that my reply is that the series or blocks of counterfoils which are mixed first and last and which presumably are emptied into the drum first and last are the counterfoils which finally remain on the outer surfaces of the mass inside and have the best chances. And then there is the pertinent fact that at each end of the drum is a space to which no porthole reaches and the foils which get there can have no chance at all.

* * *

BUT it is as well to be constructive. Everyone should have an equal chance and the only satisfactory method is to have a metallic, marble or wood substance perfectly round with either the number on the outside or made hollow to hold the counterfoil. In other words a hard round substance like a marble in a drum fitted with baffle plates would fulfil this ideal of fairness.

It is just as well to remember that the Calcutta Club Committee and Continental Premium bond drawings and State lotteries are never drawn from a drum.

The drum in Dublin is a wise method of publicity and captivates the imagination. But for the reasons given above, it is not the best means of drawing prize winners.

* * *

THIS year's Grand National is worth remembering. First the race was won in record time 9 mins. 28 secs. The going, however was very good and that may explain the second point of interest that 18 horses completed the course out of 34 competitors. This is the best average for a number of years. In 1920, five finished out of 24, in 1921, only four out of 35, 1922, five out of 32, 1923, seven out of 28, 1924, five out of 30, 1925, nine out of 33, 1926, 14 out of 30, 1927, seven out of 37, 1928, only two out of 28, 1929, nine out of 66, 1930, six out of 41, 1931, 12 out of 42, 1932, eight out of 36 and 1933, 18 out of 34.

* * *

Correspondence

Pasteurisation of Milk

To the Editor of THE ENGLISH REVIEW.

SIR,—Your contributor, Mr. A. G. Street, is entertaining as a writer of fiction, and I know of no one to-day who has depicted life on a Wiltshire farm more vividly. It is a pity that he should allow his vivid imagination scope in the realm of scientific practice in his "Countryman's Diary" in THE ENGLISH REVIEW.

The fiction that pasteurisation covers up, or, as your contributor puts it, "puts a premium on dirty milk" is hard to kill.

Pasteurisation does destroy pathogenic organisms, but it cannot make bad milk good. If it would do so, as a commercial firm we should be throwing money away by maintaining a host of farm inspectors, analysts and bacteriologists and all our other activities in connection with the improvement of raw milk supplies.

The fact is that no amount of tuberculin testing, or veterinary examination of herds, can by itself ensure the safety of milk. Pasteurisation makes good milk safe and the evidence is overwhelming that for all practical purposes no damage is done to the food value.

I suggest that, to be consistent, your contributor and other advocates of the raw should refrain from cooking their meat and vegetables.

Yours faithfully,

(United Dairies, Limited.)
J. H. MAGGS,
Chairman.

MR. A. G. STREET writes:—In reply to Mr. J. H. Maggs, I would point out that the phrase "puts a premium on stale or dirty milk" was qualified in the same sentence by "or rather takes away the present advantage which clean fresh milk has over the inferior article." In his letter Mr. Maggs says "Pasteurisation makes good milk safe"; I would add "and bad stale milk usable." I am not suggesting that United Dairies buy anything but the best, but, as pasteurisation enables milk to be kept in a sweet condition for a longer time, if all milk is pasteurised the advantage which clean fresh milk possesses over stale milk will be lost.

I hope that Mr. Maggs read some further entries in my "Countryman's Diary," which relate some conversations with various doctors. For his information, these are fact not fiction, and the proportion of medical men who buy Grade A tuberculin tested milk for their own children is astonishingly low. While doctors are in such a bewildered frame of mind over this milk question I do not think that a dairy farmer can be blamed for differing from one section of them. It is the word "compulsory" in connection with pasteurisation to which I shall continue to object until the members of the medical profession are unanimous in their opinions.

I notice that the Manchester electors heavily defeated this idea of compulsory pasteurisation. Surely the consumer is entitled to his opinion. I can assure both Mr. Maggs and the consumers of milk that the dairy farmers of England will eagerly do anything in connection with the production of milk when the nation has made up its mind what it wants, and also signifies its willingness to pay for it. Unfortunately this happy state of things has not yet happened.

I thank Mr. Maggs for his compliment to myself as a writer of fiction, and I can honestly return it by saying that no one appreciates more than I do what he and his firm have done for the betterment of the nation's milk supply.

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SCOTLAND—(*continued*).

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